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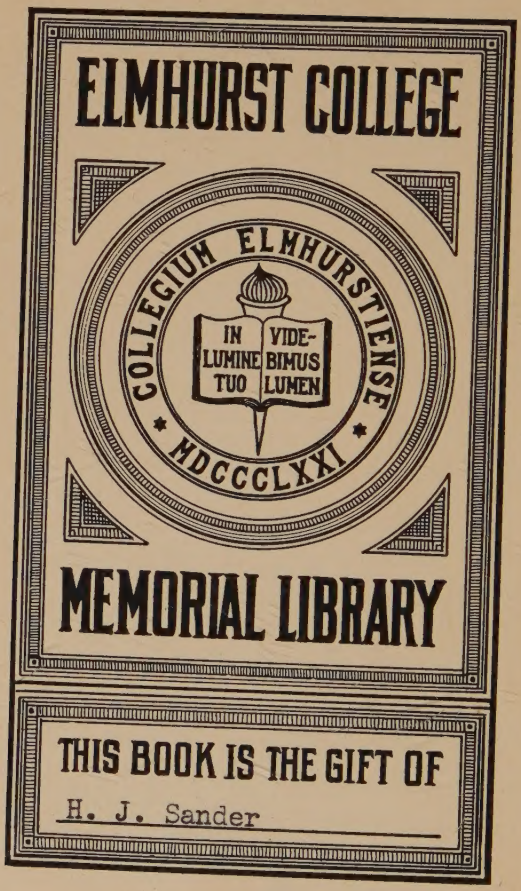

BUILDERS OF MODERN INDIA

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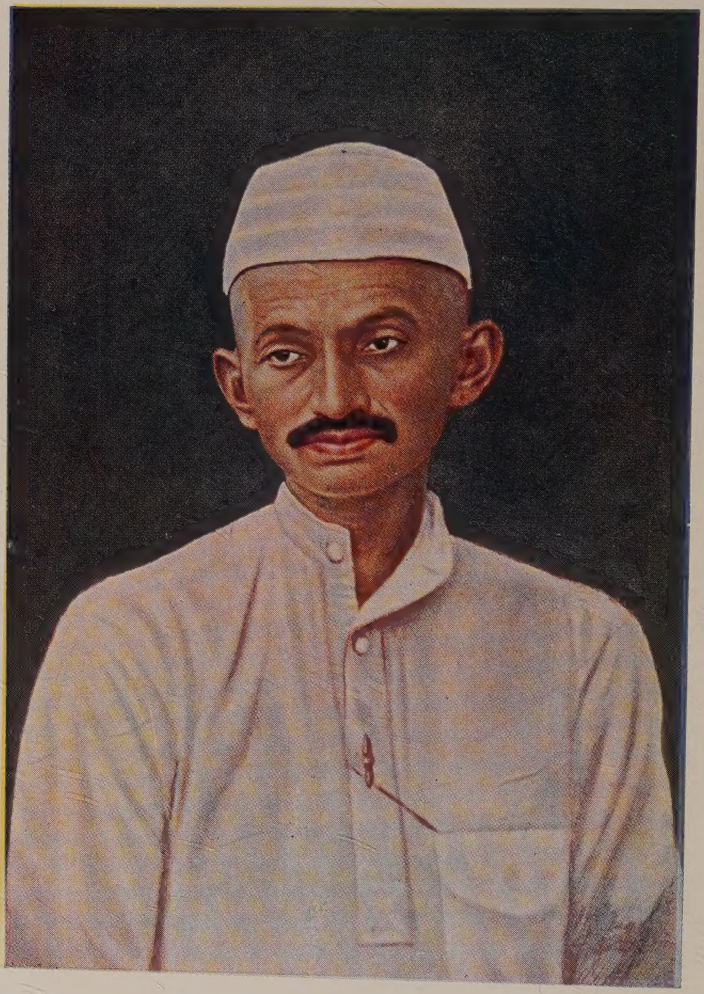

Mahatma Gandhi

Reduced facsimile of a popular colour-print of Mahātmā Gāndhī, sold in the bazaars of India.

BUILDERS OF MODERN INDIA

Mahatma Gandhi

An Essay in Appreciation

BY

R. M. GRAY, M.A.

AND

MANILAL C. PAREKH, B.A.

SECOND EDITION

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WITH regard to my share in the writing of this little book I should like to express my thanks to several friends who have given me valuable counsel and other generous help; in particular, among others, to Dr. J. N. Farquhar, now Professor of Comparative Religion in the University of Manchester, who first asked us to undertake the work; to Dr. N. Macnicol, of Poona, who put his wide knowledge freely at my disposal, and who has spared time to read the proofs; to Mr. K. T. Paul, for many suggestions and for his constant interest and encouragement; and to my friend, Mr. K. Natarajan, Editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*.

February, 1924. R.M.G.

IN reprinting this book opportunity has been taken to give references for quotations from Mr. Gāndhī's writings and speeches, and to add a short bibliography of books bearing on his life and work. The time has not yet come for attempting a valuation of Mr. Gāndhī's activities since his release from prison, but a brief account of the Unity Conference, held at Delhi in Sept.–Oct., 1924, has been added as an appendix.

June, 1925.

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I

HOME AND EARLY TRAINING

THE peninsula of Kathiawād has been justly famed from times immemorial as the home of strong and sturdy races. The greatest and one of the earliest of these was that of the Yadavs, to which Krishna, the great philosopher king, belonged, whose home, Dwarka, is still a place of pilgrimage for Hindus from all parts of India. To-day Kathiawād consists of a number of Native States, mostly Hindu. The population is about three millions: three-fourths Hindu, the rest Muhammadan. The two communities have lived together on fairly good terms, one reason being that some of the principal Muhammadan families are Aryan in race, and were originally Hindu in religion. Hence also the people of the province are of a more homogeneous character, and their civilization is of a more purely Aryan kind, than in many parts of India. The distinctions between various castes and communities are less sharp than elsewhere, and the whole province gives the impression of one large middle-class population in which the poorest and the lowest do not differ much from the richest and the highest. Though Kathiawād is a sub-province of Gujarat it has an individuality of its own, which marks out its inhabitants from the Gujaratis proper. The Kathiawādis are a decidedly virile race, known for their courage, strength and hospitality. It is remarkable that this little province should have given to new India two of

her most powerful leaders, Dayānanda Śaraswatī, and "Mahātmā" Gāndhī.

One of the most important communities in the province is that of the Banias, who form pre-eminently the middle class, and are noted for the virtues of sanity, prudence, thrift and industry. An enterprising people, at home on the sea, they have traded from early times with the coast towns of Arabia and Africa. It was in a family belonging to a sub-caste of this Bania community that Mōhandās Karamchand Gāndhī was born, on the 2nd of October, 1869, in the coast-town of Porbander. Thus he belongs to the Vaiśya or commercial caste. The dewanship of the Porbander State had been held by the Gāndhīs for two generations, and if there is anything in heredity it is not wonderful that the ablest of the third generation should have turned naturally to politics and developed remarkable administrative ability. Some years after the birth of Mōhandās his father had to leave the Porbander service, and move with his family to Rājkōt, where he was soon appointed Dewan by the Chief of the State. This place, which had been growing in importance since it was chosen to be the headquarters of the Political Agency of the British Government, was one of the few in Kathiawād in those days to possess a high school, a fact which made it possible for the young Mōhandās to receive a better education than might otherwise have been his lot.

The elder Karamchand Gāndhī is said to have served the Rājkōt State honestly and faithfully. He had a reputation for being wholly incorruptible. When the Thakore of Rājkōt urged him to accept a piece of ground, as much as he desired, as a reward for long service, he at first indignantly refused, feeling that he was being bribed. When his relatives persuaded him, he would take only a

mere strip. Money had no more attraction for him than it afterwards had for his son, and before his death he had given away in charity the greater part of his possessions. Unfortunately, serious illness cut his service short, and for the last five years of his life he was bedridden. Long after, Mr. Gāndhī told his own sons, from the gaol in Pretoria, of the happy hours he had spent in caring for his father, and no doubt in those years he learned some of his early lessons in tenderness and self-denial. Moreover, Kaba Gāndhī, as he was familiarly called, was a deeply religious man, and loved his *Gītā* well. Hence it is most likely that there was a special companionship between the sick father, and the youngest and most sensitive of his children.

Yet of the home influences the most effective and the most lasting was that of his mother. Like most Indian women, the mother of Mōhandās was devoted to religion, and as a widow she cultivated the religious life still more earnestly. It was chiefly her silent influence that weaned her son from meat-eating, to which he had taken, and thus saved him from what was considered sinful and abominable. Again it was her deep solicitude that made her insist on his taking a vow before going to England to avoid meat-diet, wine and women, a vow which, to use his own words, "saved me from many a pitfall in London." The full significance of this vow can be understood only when it is remembered that in those days, when very few people from Kathiawād had visited Europe, not to take meat and wine in a cold climate was believed to be dangerous to life. The vow was the last gift of a good mother to her son, for she died before he returned to India. He has never ceased to revere her memory.

The religious faith of the family had for some generations been Vaishnavism, and this too created an atmosphere

round young Mōhandās which has clung to him through life. Like most Hindu children, he became acquainted, through one source or another, with the great stories of Rāma and Sītā, of Prahlād, of Hariśchandrā, of the heroes of the *Mahābhārata*. Moreover, it was before a Jain *sādhu* that his mother took him to have the vow administered before he left home, and that fact would suggest that the influence of Jainism, with its unique emphasis upon the sacredness of all life, an influence characteristic of this province, had reached the Gāndhī family. Thus a variety of religious influences played upon the boyhood of Mōhandās, and, though he was not known to have any special leaning towards religion, but rather the the reverse, there were left traces which, unknown to himself, were leading him, slowly but surely, along his destined path.

When he was twelve years old he was married. Though Mr. Gāndhī opposes early marriages, he has always held that, under the conditions of Indian society, they often turn out most happily; and it may be believed that he argues from his own experience. Though Mrs. Gāndhī is not highly educated in the modern sense of the term, she has that cultivation of the mind and spirit which comes to those who keep before them such ideals of Hindu womanhood as Sītā, Sāvitri, Tārāmāti. Under the guidance of her husband, Mrs. Gāndhī was forced into public life in South Africa when the legality of Indian marriages was questioned. She was one of the first women to go to gaol on that account, and ever since she has continued to take part in her husband's activities, with a courage and self-forgetfulness which have become more marked as the years have passed.

While he was at the high school at Rājkōt young

Mōhandās was assailed by doubts about the value of religion, and even about the existence of God. It was a time when atheism was in fashion in schools and colleges; it was regarded as a sign of culture to look down upon all religions as so much exploded superstition. A mere smattering of English was enough to fill its possessor with a sense of superior illumination, the first manifestation of which was open unbelief and scoffing at religion. Through this stage the boy had to pass. About the same time, probably from a boy's desire to experiment with life and to prove his independence, he took to the eating of meat, an aberration from which he was saved by the example and precept of his godly mother. Whatever the cause, he does not seem to have gained much from his education at school, nor to have chosen the best of company. After matriculating he went to the Samaldas College at Bhavnagar, where he spent a year or two without paying much attention to his studies or profiting much by them.

There is, however, one story of his early boyhood which throws light upon his character, and is interesting in view of what he has since become. A feast was given at Kaba Gāndhī's house, and one of the guests was a young man who had been invited by Mōhandās himself. The principal dish was mangoes, in those days a greater rarity than they are now. By some mistake this friend did not receive the usual summons at dinner-time, and when he was missed and sent for it was too late, as he had already dined. As a self-imposed penance for this failure in courtesy, the boy of ten did not eat any more mangoes that season, fond as he was of them, and though both his father and his friend tried to persuade him that such self-denial was not called for. Thus early he accustomed himself to impose penance upon himself for

any neglect of duty. In these days, too, whatever worse influences were upon him, he learned the habit of truthfulness which has been throughout the foundation of his character.

It was also very early shown that he possessed a strong will not easily bent. Once he had made up his mind, nothing could dissuade him. Not only in matters of moral consequence, but in all things, great or small, he would have his way, caring not what trouble came upon himself or upon others. Often it was a case not only of strong will but of self-will. The things he was determined to do, nothing would keep him from doing. Thus, when barely nineteen, he made up his mind, contrary to the wishes of all his relatives, including his mother, to go to England to qualify for the Bar. Among other difficulties there was that of caste, which would surely lead to his being excommunicated when he returned, a greater calamity then than it is to-day. But no obstacle would deter him, and he so prevailed upon his family that they did their utmost to provide him with the necessary funds. Whatever else was to be said for it, there is no doubt that this venture, for it was nothing less, showed a power of initiative and an independence of judgment which have characterized all his life.

He went to England in the year 1888 and spent three years there. At first he set out to be an "English gentleman," dressing with great care and taking lessons in elocution, dancing, the violin and French. But his serious nature, or some sense of humour, came to the rescue, and he threw these things away. He devoted himself to study, and, in addition to the usual work for the Bar, he prepared himself for the London Matriculation examination. Moreover, he began to live a far more rigorous life, cooking most of his own food, and living as simply and as economically as possible. It was the first deliberate choice of

that austerity and simplicity of habit which have marked his way of living ever since. Some of the Indian students who came then to be his friends say that he was not like other students, and they used to banter him for a seriousness which would not allow him to join much in the gaieties of the life around him. The vow which his mother had made him take, and which he rigidly kept, protected him from many a temptation to which he might otherwise have yielded.

His habit of vegetarianism brought him a friend in Dr. Josiah Oldfield, who introduced him to other members of the Vegetarian Society. Mr. Gāndhī became himself a member of that society, and it may have been this association which made him so keen a student of dietetics. Dr. Oldfield interested him in Christianity, and it was probably through his influence that he first came to know something of the life of Christ. He made friends also among Theosophists, who, if they did not succeed in inducing him to join their society, at least led him to study the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Being urged by a friend to study the Bible, he set out to read it through from the beginning, but, not finding much to interest him in *Genesis* and *Exodus*, he gave it up. He attended service at some Christian churches, and heard famous preachers like Spurgeon and Farrar, and especially and with most interest Dr. Parker, to whose services in the City Temple he went again and again. Altogether his stay in England was a valuable experience. Religion became a new thing to him. His outlook was broadened, and in the many friendships which he formed with both men and women of high character a new world opened up to him. Besides all this, it was then that he first met Dādābhāi Naorōji, known later as "the grand old man of India," whose life of self-sacrifice and disinterested devotion to his

country became an inspiration to the younger man. Thus this first visit of Mr. Gāndhī to England was a very happy episode. The feeling with which he regarded it could not be better expressed than in his own words to Mr. Doke, his first English biographer: "Even now, next to India, I would rather live in London than in any other part of the world."

Mr. Gāndhī returned to India after being duly called to the Bar, and was met on his arrival by the sorrowful news of his mother's death. It had taken place some time before, but he had not been told of it. The first thing to be done was to undergo the *prāyaśchit*, i.e. the purification ceremony for readmission to the caste circle. For this purpose his brother took him directly from Bombay to Nasik, which, being a place of pilgrimage, was considered better fitted for the rite. On his return to Rājkōt he was duly received back into religious communion with the members of his caste. Meanwhile the leaders of his caste in Bombay and Porbander had regularly excommunicated him, and to this day Mahātmā Gāndhī is excluded by them from religious privileges.

He began his practice as a barrister in Rājkōt, but professional advance was not easy there, and he found it hard to make his way. Moreover, he did not know Indian law well enough, and in order to perfect his knowledge and to find a larger field for practice he went to live in Bombay. It was there that he came to know a man whose teaching and personal example have had a greater influence upon him than those of any other single person. This was a Jain youth, of nearly the same age as himself, who belonged to the same Bania community, and came also from Kathiawād. Rājchandra Ravjibhāi was the most highly gifted among a number of young men

M. K. GĀNDHĪ AS A STUDENT OF LAW

From a photograph taken in London.

who in those days were working earnestly for the uplifting of the Jain community. He was a poet, and hence is usually called Rājchandra Kavi. He possessed a prodigious memory. But, more than that, he was a religious genius, who, though he died at the early age of thirty-three, profoundly influenced many people, and did much to create quite a new spirit among the Jains of Gujarat. With his idealism, and his belief in a good life as the most essential part of religion, he made an appeal to the kindred spirit of Mōhandās Gāndhī as no other has done before or since. Of him Mr. Gāndhī wrote: "The more I consider his life and writings, the more I consider him to have been the best Indian of his times. Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. Both Kavi and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached." It is from him that Mr. Gāndhī derives much of the substance of his religious and moral thought, including the great emphasis he sets on truth, non-violence and perfect continence. Later on, when in South Africa Mr. Gāndhī was seriously thinking of accepting Christianity, he had some very important correspondence with Rājchandra Kavi, a correspondence which had some share in preventing him from joining the Christian Church.

While Mr. Gāndhī was thus studying both law and religion, possibly to the neglect of his practice, which grew but slowly, the problem of self-support became increasingly urgent. Fortunately, there came an offer of work from a Muhammadan firm in Africa, which he accepted. Thus a new chapter was opened in his life, a chapter full of meaning not only for himself and the Indian community in South Africa, but for the whole of India.

II

MR. GANDHI IN SOUTH AFRICA

IT was not long before Mr. Gāndhī had abundant occasion to put into practice the lessons which he had learned from Rājchandra, and especially the lesson of *ahiṁsā*, i.e. non-violence in thought, word and deed. His earliest experiences in South Africa were painful and disillusioning. Within the first day or two he received such insulting treatment, not without bodily injury, as would have been enough to embitter any but a very serene and forgiving spirit. And this suffering, because it was only typical of what all his compatriots were subject to in South Africa, forced upon him the whole question of how injustice could be best met and resisted.

Happily all his experiences were not of this kind. From the beginning he made friends with some truly Christian people, both Dutch and English, and had happy intercourse with them. He spent much time in study. His contract with his client was for a year, and during those months he read as many as eighty books, mostly religious and philosophical. He read through the whole of the Bible, and came to see the greatness of Christ's moral teaching as given in the Sermon on the Mount. His acquaintance with Tolstoy also began at this time. The great Russian writer's dominant ideas made a strong appeal to him, as they have done to many Indians. Another book which impressed him much was *The Perfect Way*, by Dr. Anna Kingsford,

a book in which is given the gnostic interpretation of Christianity. The study of these and of more directly Christian books led him to think seriously of accepting Christianity, and he corresponded on this subject both with Rājchandra and with his English friend, Dr. Oldfield. It was probably at this time that he came to know and admire the writings of Keshub Chunder Sen. Thus in study and work and fellowship with friends he spent a happy and profitable year. Meanwhile there was brewing a veritable storm, the quelling of which was to draw upon all his growing spirituality and moral power.

The very day on which he was to be entertained by his Indian friends at Durban, before leaving for India, he read in one of the local papers of a Bill to disfranchise Indians. He also heard that this was to be followed by other similar measures. At once he took the opportunity of the gathering in his honour to warn his countrymen of the impending danger, and to protest against the passing of the Bill. They begged him to give them a lead, and accordingly he drew up a petition to Government. Though this action did not prevent the passing of the Bill, it made Indian feeling articulate to the Government, and won a measure of sympathy from the Natal Press. It was the beginning, for the Indians in Africa, of a new sensitiveness regarding what they believed to be their just rights. As for Mr. Gāndhī, a new and undreamed-of avenue of service to his countrymen opened itself out to him, and when the Indians in Natal urged him to remain there and watch over their interests, guaranteeing a practice, he agreed. Though some opposition, on the ground of colour, was raised by the Natal Law Society to his admission as an attorney to the Supreme Court of Natal, the difficulty was overcome, and the next two years were spent in carrying

on a growing practice, and in educating and organizing Indian public opinion. In 1896 he came to India, after an absence of three years, to fetch his wife and children.

Before leaving for India Mr. Gāndhī had written an Open Letter, in which he had set forth all the disabilities from which the Indian community was suffering, and explained what ought to be done, both by the Indians themselves and by the South African Government. In India he gave lectures on the same subject in Bombay, Poona, Madras, and at other places. As was natural, the story he had to tell of the wrongs of his countrymen stirred the Indian mind, so that feeling ran high. Of this Reuter sent an exaggerated report, with the result that Mr. Gāndhī's action was misunderstood by the colonists in South Africa. The feeling roused against him was so bitter that when, after a few months' stay in India, he returned, a demonstration was organized to prevent him, and a number of Indians who were with him, from landing. What made the matter more serious was this, that even the Natal Government was in sympathy with the demonstrators. It was a critical moment, and mob-violence was feared by all. The Indians were undaunted, and actually did land after a Government officer had guaranteed their safety. The Attorney-General of Natal addressed and dispersed the huge crowd of about four thousand men gathered to prevent the landing, promising that Government would deal as early as possible with the question about which they wanted to take the law into their own hands.

Soon after, when Mr. Gāndhī left the ship, and in company with a European friend set out to make his way to a Parsi friend's house, where Mrs. Gāndhī and the children had already been taken, the alarm was given, and a large crowd gathered at once. In the confusion the two

friends were separated, and then an ugly attack, with the usual missiles of an angry mob, was made upon Mr. Gāndhī. He was saved, possibly from death, by a European lady, the wife of the superintendent of police. But again, at nightfall, the house was surrounded, and it was only by dressing himself as an Indian constable, with a metal saucer under his turban, and attended by a detective as an Indian merchant, in accordance with police instructions, that he made his escape, and saved himself, his family and his friend's house, from the fury of the mob.

The storm soon blew over. Even the *Natal Mercury* wrote thus of the alleged defamatory speeches of Mr. Gāndhī in India:

"Mr. Gāndhī on his part, and on behalf of his countrymen, has done nothing that he is not entitled to do, and from his point of view the principle he is working for is an honourable and legitimate one. He is within his rights, and so long as he acts honestly and in a straightforward manner he cannot be blamed or interfered with. So far as we know, he has always done so, and his latest pamphlet we cannot honestly say is an unfair statement of the case from his point of view. Reuter's cable is a gross exaggeration of Mr. Gāndhī's statement."

Soon after this the Boer War broke out, and Mr. Gāndhī, with his keen sense of duty, felt that the Indians must do something to prove themselves worthy of the part they aspired to play in the life of South Africa. He brought the matter before the people, and they readily agreed. He then made an offer to Government on their behalf and on his own, of any service for which they might be judged fit, but received no encouragement. Only later, when the situation became serious and there was need for all the help that could be got, was this offer accepted, and an Indian Ambulance Corps formed, which nearly

a thousand Indians joined. The services which the Indians, under the personal guidance of Mr. Gāndhī, rendered at this time, were recognized by all, and they did not a little to raise them in the estimation of their fellow-colonists. Twice they went into the firing-line, though that was not within the terms of their contract, and in no way did they spare themselves. The feeling which grew up between the colonists and the Indians was so good that a monument was raised, partly by public subscription, to the memory of those Indians who had fallen in the war. It was a new experience for the Indians, whose manhood was strengthened by the sense of having done their duty by their adopted country, and of having shown their loyalty to the Empire, of which they came at this time to be called the "Eastern Sons."

But another lesson of this war was not lost upon the Indians, and particularly upon their leader. The Boers, who were a mere handful of people compared with the British, had defied the might of the Empire, and had shown signal bravery, determination and self-sacrifice. Moreover, that spirit was displayed not by men only, but by women and children. The brave Boer women took part even in fighting, and when they could not do that they encouraged their husbands and sons to fight and die for their country and their independence. Women and children suffered innumerable hardships, and would not ask their men to stop the struggle. This was bravery and heroism of a high order. To seek a parallel an Indian could only think of those old days, nearly ten centuries before, when the Kshatriya clans fought with limitless courage, and women burned themselves to death rather than fall into the hands of their enemies. A man so patriotic and so thoughtful as Mr. Gāndhī could not but feel the degradation which

had come over his countrymen since then, and the contrast between the handful of Boers and the millions of India. One of the main lessons he drew therefrom was this, that nothing was worth having without sacrifice and suffering.

Mr. Gāndhī's faith in non-violence was also more firmly established than ever, now that he had realized from personal experience what violence in national quarrels meant. He saw with his own eyes how it brutalized men, and probably felt more than ever that violence could not be the last word even between nations. Later on his experience in the Zulu Rebellion confirmed him in his conviction, and he became the passive resister which he has been ever since. Thus there is no doubt that the Boer War was to Mr. Gāndhī an experience which left its marks upon him, and something to mould and clarify his character. It was a challenge to his Indian, or more particularly his Hindu, manhood, and to the much boasted superiority of the East and of India, in spiritual matters, over the West. An opportunity was soon to come of putting that superiority to the test, and in taking it Mr. Gāndhī made an experiment which, for the scale on which it was made, was altogether new in history.

No sooner was the war over than the Transvaal Government, now become British, created an Asiatic Department, the object of which was to segregate the Indians and separate them, as far as possible, from the Europeans. In Natal, too, the same spirit prevailed. In order to meet this crisis Mr. Gāndhī, who had left Africa to settle in India, was recalled, and he reached Pretoria on the 1st of January, 1903. By education, position and character he was marked out as the leader of the Indians, and they had no other. But from the first the officials of the new department would have nothing to do

with him. In the words of Mr. Doke, "official ignorance, race-prejudice and pride spoiled everything." All this made it the more necessary for Mr. Gāndhī to remain in the Transvaal, and accordingly he had himself enrolled as an attorney of the Supreme Court there. From the first the one demand of the Indians was that there should be no separate treatment, such as should tend to mark them off from other people on the ground of colour or race. Such invidious distinctions had not been made under the Dutch Government, and now that the colony had become a British possession it was the more unseemly that they should be introduced.

While this struggle was going on, Mr. Gāndhī started a paper, called *Indian Opinion*, in order to educate the Indian community more systematically. Issued as it was from the beginning in four languages, English, Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati, it naturally involved considerable initial expense. Even afterwards the paper never became self-supporting, and Mr. Gāndhī had to finance it all along from his own pocket. This paper has had able editors, and it has done fine work for the Indian community, which without it would have hardly been able to carry on the great struggle to which it found itself committed. Another important piece of work done by Mr. Gāndhī at this time was the establishment of a sort of *āśram*, called the "Phœnix Settlement." He got the idea partly from Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, and partly from an agricultural experiment which some of his relatives were making in Natal. He bought some land, and with the help of these cousins and the workers of *Indian Opinion* set about developing it. The main purpose underlying this settlement was to teach the value of a simple life and the dignity of labour. It was conducted

MR. GĀNDHĪ AS HE APPEARED
IN 1906

more or less on Tolstoyan principles, and the place became a source of inspiration not only to the few workers there, but to the whole Indian community.

In the year 1906 came the Zulu Rebellion. Mr. Gāndhī again offered his own and his countrymen's services, as in the Boer War. After some hesitation their offer was accepted, and a Bearer Corps was formed of about two dozen men, with Mr. Gāndhī at their head. One of the chief duties assigned to this corps was the nursing of those Zulus who had been lashed. It was a terrible experience for these men. They saw to what extent human cruelty could go, and what was involved in the colonization and conquest of countries whose people were ignorant of the arts of modern war. Speaking of this lashing business, Mr. Doke writes:

"Mr. Gāndhī spoke with great reserve of this experience. What he saw he will never divulge. I imagine it was not always creditable to British humanity. At times he doubted whether his position was right. No one besides his men, however, was prepared to do the work, and sheer pity for the sufferers forbade them to relinquish it. Not infrequently the condition of the lashed men who were placed in their charge was appalling, the wounds filthy, their lives hanging in the balance. Dr. Savage (who was in charge) won the unstinted praise of all. To the native patients he was invariably humane. But among the Europeans apparently he was the exception. So these Indians toiled at their irksome tasks day after day, cleansing wounds, binding up rents which the lash had made, carrying the helpless men behind the cavalry, up and down the hills for twenty miles at a stretch, or attending to the sanitation of the camp."

All this time the movement against the Asiatics was growing, until it culminated in the Asiatic Registration Act of 1906, which required from all Asiatics registration with thumb-impressions. The object of this measure was to

prevent free and unrestricted immigration from Asia, an object in which the Indians were ready to co-operate to the best of their ability. Their complaint was that this compulsory registration was a libel upon their community, and as such robbed them of their self-respect. To protest against the measure before it received the Royal sanction, Mr. Gāndhī and a Muhammadan gentleman went to England. The deputation was well received, much sympathy was shown to the Indian cause, and the Royal sanction was delayed until the Transvaal constitutional Government should be formed. But all this availed nothing. As soon as the constitutional Government was formed the same Act was passed by Parliament at a single sitting, and quickly received the Royal sanction. The colonists felt that for them the restriction, as far as possible, of Asiatic immigration was a question of self-preservation, if they were to keep the colony a white man's country. The Indians on their side, while admitting the substance of this claim, felt that it was derogatory to their self-respect to be compelled to register themselves in the manner of convicts. They felt the injustice of it, and under the inspiration of their leader made up their minds, on the 6th September, 1906, to suffer imprisonment, and whatever else might come, rather than yield. It was thus that the Passive Resistance movement of South Africa was born, a movement which made Mr. Gāndhī famous all over the world for the spirit in which he conducted it.

Neither the idea nor the practice of passive resistance is new to the world. It is a weapon to the hand of anyone who is confronted with an evil he is too weak or too scrupulous actively to resist. Strikes are a form of it, and strikes are familiar in Indian history, as, for example, when, at Gondal in Kathiawār, in the middle of last century,

some *banias* closed their shops as a protest against the selling of flesh in the open street, until the State passed a law forbidding Mussulmans to kill animals in public, and requiring them to carry flesh in covered baskets. Another form of it is the refusal to pay taxes in protest against what is believed to be an unjust law, and the Indians knew that this kind of passive resistance had been practised by many citizens in England at the time of the education controversy. Mr. Gāndhī was much influenced by Tolstoy and Thoreau, and he acknowledges his debt. But he says that he first found the principle involved in some Gujarati verses which he read as a boy, and in the New Testament. The chief of the Gujarati verses is, "He who returned good for evil, he alone has lived truly." And the teaching of Christ is, "Resist not evil," "Love your enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use you." Whether the principle of passive resistance can be legitimately drawn from these sayings is open to dispute. But it cannot be doubted that this way of resisting evil is a much higher and more Christian way than that of violence. It is also very powerful. When men show that they are willing to suffer for what they feel to be right, as the Indians in South Africa showed themselves, and when they have the self-control to abstain from violence, then, if their cause is just, they cannot but in the end disarm opposition. Mr. Gāndhī has always had the faith to believe this. He also saw that it was the only weapon by which his countrymen, situated as they were, could oppose injustice, and that in the use of it they would raise themselves and earn a right to the respect of their neighbours and even of their enemies. "It is a sign," says Mr. Doke, "of the awakening of the Asiatics to a sense of their manhood, the token that they do not mean to play

a servile or degraded part in our society; it is their claim, put forward in suffering, to be treated by Christians in a Christian way."

It was passive resistance of this kind that was resolved upon by the entire Asiatic community in reply to the Asiatic Registration Act. The Indians and the Chinese were driven into each other's arms, and made up their minds to stand together. They refused to register, and thus forced the Government to imprison them. Mr. Gāndhī himself was sentenced to two months' simple imprisonment, and so many people were ready to follow him that Government thought it better to negotiate. The Indians agreed to register voluntarily, provided that the new law with its racial distinction were repealed. This was promised, and Mr. Gāndhī took the lead in registering, an act for which a Pathān, under the mistaken notion that he was giving up the cause he had led them to espouse, set upon him with violence and nearly killed him. With a magnanimity all his own Mr. Gāndhī refused to take any action against his assailant, and the work of registration was completed. But when Government was asked to fulfil its part of the contract it refused, and the Indians had to resume the struggle again. This time it became more serious. Hundreds of all classes went willingly to gaol to suffer all kinds of indignities and hardships. Mr. Gāndhī served two months more, this time of rigorous imprisonment. Soon after his release he organized two deputations, one to England and the other to India, to educate public opinion; and, though some of the delegates were arrested, Mr. Gāndhī with a few more was able to go to England, while Mr. Polak came to India. While much sympathy was shown to this deputation, and the Imperial authorities tried to bring about a settlement,

the Transvaal ministers remained obdurate. In India the feeling roused by Mr. Polak's heart-rending tales of the difficulties of Indians in South Africa was intense, and the determination grew to see the evil ended. This visit of Mr. Polak brought the question of indentured coolies to the front. The people of India were justly indignant with a system which was little better than slavery. Mr. Gōkhalē took the problem up in all seriousness, and ultimately, in 1912, the Government of India abolished the system.

Meanwhile the situation in South Africa was becoming more serious and complicated, owing to a judicial decision of the Union Court declaring all Indian marriages null and void in the eye of the Union law. Another disturbing question related to the £3 tax which was levied upon all indentured coolies who, after their term was finished, might desire to stay in South Africa. Mr. Gōkhalē, when he visited the colony, saw at once the glaring injustice of this tax, made special representation to the authorities, and was promised the abolition of it, a promise not fulfilled. Then the women, too, determined to join in the struggle. In the words of Mrs. Polak, "Many Indian women, some with babies in their arms, some expecting babies to be born to them, and some quite young girls, were leaving their homes and taking part in all the hardships of the Passive Resistance campaign." They did more. They went from place to place calling out the workers and coolies. A large number of them, with Mrs. Gāndhī at their head, went joyfully to prison and took their share of hardness there. "India has many things to be proud of, but of none more than the part the Indian women of South Africa took in the uplifting and recognition of a people here despised."

The final stage of this struggle was reached when Mr.

Gāndhī, at the head of more than two thousand people, including 122 women and 50 children, "all voluntarily marching on starvation rations, without provision for shelter during stages," marched into the Transvaal, forbidden territory to most of them, to compel the Union Government to come to terms. Let men call it what they will, this march of peaceful men for a peaceful purpose was a very remarkable manifestation of the spirit which one man had called forth. Though Mr. Gāndhī was sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment, and many others to longer or shorter terms, this "invasion" had the effect which was designed. But before the end came, as though the cup of suffering were not full, some Indian strikers on the sugar plantations, where the strike had extended, were shot down. This roused strong feeling in India, and Lord Hardinge intervened. A Commission of Enquiry was demanded and ultimately appointed. It did its duty well, and in the end all its recommendations were endorsed by the Union Government. The Asiatic Act, with its sinister racial distinctions, was repealed; the annual poll-tax levied on ex-indentured Indians, their wives and grown-up children, was abolished; and Indian marriages, except those which were bigamous, were recognized. The Indians on their side accepted the principle of restricted immigration.

But it is not for its material so much as for its moral gains that this struggle is to be valued. It was, at the least, a remarkable proof of tenacity and faith that no fewer than two thousand, seven hundred persons, may of them women, should have cheerfully accepted hardship and loss rather than submit to treatment which they felt to be degrading. They emerged from it self-respecting and respected, having won a new status for themselves. As a community they learned something of the art of

modern citizenship, with its rights and duties, an art which it was essential for them to learn if they were to live on a footing of equality with Europeans. It drew them all together, Hindus, Muhammadans, Parsis, in a unity before unknown, so that it was openly said that the problem of nationality, which the Indian leaders had been trying for fifty years to solve, was solving itself spontaneously in South Africa. If this bare recital is read with some imagination, some idea will be formed of the personal power of a man who was free from all self-seeking, and of the work which in these years he accomplished, and of its cost. For Mr. Gāndhi's own life the struggle was of incalculable moral significance. He entered into it with the clearest sense of responsibility, and as it developed he became himself a greater man. His own sufferings, and the sufferings of those who followed him in the path of adventure he trod so firmly, chastened and purified him as nothing else had done. His courage never faltered. Throughout he preserved the attitude not only of ahiṁsā, but of positive goodwill towards his opponents, and showed an equanimity of mind and an unfailing cheerfulness which were a veritable triumph of the spirit. The account given in his own *Gaol Experiences* shows that it was a suffering patiently and peacefully borne, and that he came out of it tempered in the flame. It was probably during his second imprisonment that what may be called illumination came to him, as it has done to others before and since. He came to some very definite conclusions at this time about modern civilization, and he put these into the form of a religio-political gospel in his *Hind Swarāj*, soon after issued. Therein he describes the Utopia, the *Sat Yuga* or Golden Age, which he would like to see realized first in his own country, believed by him because of its inherent spirituality to be

more fit for it than any other, and then in the entire world. It is a return to more primitive times, when life was simpler. Religiously it is a return to what may be called the age of faith, in contrast to the age of reason in which he thinks we live to-day. Though the book bears the impress of having been written under the stress of the conflict between the two civilizations, there is much in it which represents his settled and permanent convictions.

The work which had kept him so long in Africa being now finished, Mr. Gāndhī made up his mind to return to India. His family needed him, and many friends, such as Mr. Gōkhalē and Sir Pherōzeshah Mehta, had long been urging him to come and help them in their national work. It was no easy thing to leave the many devoted friends whom he had made, and the whole Indian community, to whom he was father and guide; but he was needed in his own country, and he believed he had a message for his countrymen there. He sailed for India in the end of the year 1914. He had already taken the vow of chastity, and now he added to it that of poverty, surrendering a very flourishing practice yielding nearly £3,000 a year. He came to his countrymen simply as a public servant, willing to take his place by the side of the lowest and the poorest, and to suffer hardness with them, and they welcomed him as the Mahātmā of modern India.

MR. GĀNDHĪ IN 1914.

From a photograph taken in South Africa.

III

RETURN TO INDIA

MR. GĀNDHĪ returned from South Africa in 1914, hoping, as he said, for comparative peace and quietness. But it was not a time in the history of his country in which, for a spirit like his, either was possible. The Great War had begun, and one of its effects in India was to bring into relief all the unsolved problems of her political condition, and to make vocal all her discontents. It was impossible for a servant of his country like Mr. Gāndhī to keep long out of the fray.

It may help towards an understanding of the part he played, and of the extraordinary influence which he came to wield, if we pause to consider the convictions and the habits of living and thinking which he brought with him out of his African experience.

First, it is clear that religion had become the supreme guide of his life. His earlier scepticism had given place to settled convictions, which became more and more unshakable, as the years passed. He disclaims saintship, but claims sincerity in applying religion to all decisions of conduct, and among others to matters of politics. He remained a Hindu in faith, finding in Hinduism as he interpreted it a satisfying religion, but claiming the right to reject whatever he took to be corrupt accretions, inconsistent with its ancient purity. Yet he freely accepted light from every quarter. To him all religions contained a measure of truth.

The Bible he looked upon as part of his Scriptures. He said, "The spirit of the Sermon on the Mount competes almost on equal terms with the *Bhagavad Gītā* for the domination of my heart." For Jesus Christ he had and has the deepest reverence, seeing in Him a revelation, though not a unique revelation, of God.

Together with the habits of prayer and meditation, he had adopted with more and more completeness the practice of an ascetic. From his days in London, when he had preserved his self-command before the beguilements of a foreign town, he had advanced in mastery over all bodily desire. Riches he had put away from him, reducing possessions to the bare minimum. His habit of life had become simple to the verge of austerity. His food is of the simplest, and suffices only to support life, his clothing only what is at the command of the poorest of his countrymen. Men speak of the gorgeousness of the East, and of the necessity for grandeur and imposing ceremony to command respect. "They that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." But it is not these things which truly win India's homage. No splendour of court and retinue can do that so certainly as the dignity which can dispense with luxury and sit aloof from multiplied comforts. Nor are there many of us who are not rebuked by an independence of earthly things so austere and so serene.

Mr. Gāndhī also brought with him a patriotism tried in the fire. In Africa he had come to have no ends of his own apart from the good of his people. From the beginning of his public life he had toiled and suffered to win for them what he believed to be essential for freedom and justice. He had identified himself with all who were ill-treated and disinherited, making his own the woes of all who suffered unjustly. Though he took part with the

Government against the Boers, he was impressed by the courage and tenacity which enabled a poor nation to hold out so long against the force of an Empire like the British. He saw that the weakness of his countrymen in Africa was due to their weakness and political subordination in their own land. He could not, therefore, but passionately desire that great changes should come in India, bringing with them a renaissance of all that had been greatest in the past, and giving India a real place among the nations of the world.

Yet in this patriotism there was little of that narrow and exclusive national prejudice, which is the most deadly menace in our day to the peace of the world. It was a triumph of sanity and forbearance in Mr. Gāndhī that all his experience of intolerance and injustice had not embittered him, or distorted his judgment of British rule. He continued to believe in the principles of British government, preferring it to any other because, as he said, it interfered least with individuals. He believed that what he fought against in South Africa, and what he saw to be defective in the administration of India, was contrary to those principles, and that if the British people could be brought to understand the Indian case, the Indian demand would be granted at once. He had no desire that the destinies of India should be separated from those of Britain, but insisted that Britain should yield to India a freedom and a measure of responsibility without which she could not be a self-respecting partner in the Empire. He had seen something of what is best in English character, as well as something of what Englishmen can fall to under pressure of fear or avarice. And he retained that readiness to see good everywhere, and to make friends with those who are friendly, which has always been one of his qualities.

But perhaps one result of his experience in Africa affected his political outlook more lastingly than any other. It gave him a profound distrust of the fruits of Western civilization. The evil he had seen in England, and much more the evil he had seen in Africa, seemed to him the necessary result of a degrading worship of material good. In a moment of unusual bitterness he wrote, "Many problems can be solved by remembering that money is their God."[1] He had seen to what depths of intolerance and cruel selfishness men can sink when they set out to exploit weaker peoples to enrich themselves. For a man who holds so fastidiously aloof as Mr. Gāndhī does from the luxuries and even the comforts for which some men sell their souls, there is something inexpressibly revolting about the multiplying of possessions and complication of needs which reduce the life of many, both in the East and in the West, to a sordid struggle. And, like many other austere souls, he sees no other escape than by complete renunciation. It was his dread that this civilization, which seemed to him to have destroyed human happiness in Europe, should spread over India and displace something much more ancient and much more beautiful. He saw its corrupting influence already at work. In Ahmedabad, which he had made his home, there are some of the most beautiful buildings in India, memorials of Muhammadan, but also of Hindu, greatness. Side by side with these are some of the most unsightly products of modern industrialism, eighty cotton mills, and housing conditions for the operatives which reproduce the worst to be found anywhere. It is typical of something which Mr. Gāndhī saw everywhere at work. And he said, "God save India from that modern

[1] Cf. Lecture on Economic *v.* Moral Progress—*Speeches and Writings*, pp. 286-93.

curse." He believed that she had inherited from her own ancient civilization something very much finer, that she stood for the supremacy of spirit over matter, and had little of any absolute value to learn from the West. In his little pamphlet, *Hind Swarāj*, he carried the repudiation of all the achievements of science and invention so far as to disconcert and estrange many even of his own countrymen. He paints an ideal state for his country, in which mills and machinery, including the printing press, railways, even medical science and hospitals, will have no place. He knows that the time is not ripe for such a change. "It requires a higher simplicity and renunciation than the people are to-day prepared for." He himself uses the railway and the motor car and the printing press, for, as things are, he could do little of his work without them. But he longs for the time when all these corruptors of simplicity should be put away, and India delivered from the deadliest menace to her spiritual life.

Lastly, Mr. Gāndhī brought with him back to India a very definite conviction, knit to the utmost fixity by all his conflicts and sufferings in Africa, of how evil is best resisted. The doctrine of non-violent resistance to wrong is woven into all his thoughts about life. The origin of it goes back to his earliest days. A verse of a Gujarati poem which he learned at school, clung to him:

> "If a man gives you a drink of water, and you give him a drink in return, that is nothing.
> Real beauty consists in doing good against evil."

Afterwards he found the same teaching in the Sermon on the Mount and in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. He says himself that the impression so made and deepened, was given permanent form by Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. In his defence of the Indian cause in Africa

he had proved the adequacy of non-violent resistance to win redress of wrong. He had found it to be the only weapon which people, placed as the Indian colonists were, could use with any hope. It was the weapon of the weak. But he had not adopted it merely as a policy, as the most expedient method of resisting evil. He believed it to be the only right method. It should be also the weapon of the strong. If a greater conflict than any which he had led before was awaiting him on the soil of the Motherland, it was this weapon which he would have to use. For he had no other. He was prepared to work with men who did not share his faith, provided that for the time they would adopt his method. He was prepared to argue for it on the ground of expediency, and to co-operate with men who held wholly different views, provided that they would accept it as the wisest policy. But for him it has always been far more than a policy. It is part of his religion.[1]

From the very first it must have been obvious that, for a man with these habits and convictions, one who brought with him a character finely tempered by unflinching endurance in the face of danger and hardness, there could be little ease or rest in India. It might even have been foretold what attitude he would take up towards the questions that were seething in the minds of his countrymen. Resistance to injustice had become instinctive with him, and it was certain that, wherever he saw what he believed to be a wrong, he would spare himself no toil to expose it and fight against it. With his belief in freedom, it was certain that he would range himself along with those who demanded for India the same measure of

[1] Vide *Speeches and Writings*, pp. 179 ff.

independence as was enjoyed by the other partners in the British Commonwealth. He had seen what came of political subordination. He believed that the connection between Britain and India as it existed was good for the people of neither land. It seemed to him to injure both governed and governors. It encouraged in the British an attitude of arrogant superiority. Among the Indians it tended to produce the habit of mind natural to a conquered people, and to deprive them of vigour and resource and initiative. He had no desire to see the connection broken, but wished to have it so modified as to become consistent with Indian self-respect. Therefore the attainment of *swarāj* would be from the beginning, as in fact it remained to the end, the great object of all his striving. He also believed that the British connection had resulted in an impoverishment of the people. In every country the introduction of machinery had brought a displacement of labour, with consequent temporary suffering. The rise of the factory left little place for the home worker, and the hand-worker could not compete with the machine. But in India the evil was exaggerated by the facts that labour displaced could not easily be absorbed in a country whose industrial development had only begun, and that the machine-made goods which displaced it were produced not in India but in Britain. In that Mr. Gāndhī saw nothing but loss and impoverishment of the Indian peasant for the enrichment of Lancashire. It was inevitable that before many months had passed he should be led to adopt the policy, which at first he rejected, of boycotting all foreign cloth.

It would also be early apparent that Mr. Gāndhī would hold no high opinion of education as it had been organized by the Government. Others might feel that, with all its defects, it had been largely the education which they had

received which had prepared Indians to ask for and to receive the full measure of responsibility which they were now demanding. But Mr. Gāndhī felt that it had tended to produce slavish habits of mental subservience. The fact that the medium of the higher instruction was a foreign language was to him a sufficient condemnation. He believed that it added enormously and unnecessarily to the student's difficulties, and also that it led to a degradation of the vernaculars, and to a general depreciation of Indian culture. It might have been foretold that one of the measures which he would come to advocate would be the withdrawing of pupils from Government or Government-aided schools and colleges.

But if Mr. Gāndhī was from the first predestined to be an unsparing critic of the ways and the works of Government, he was to be an equally frank and outspoken critic of his own countrymen. His eyes were open to the defects which, more than anything coming from without, were hindrances to progress. As with his questioning mind he travelled through the country, he saw that swarāj could only come if the people took pains to make themselves fit for it. He blamed them for the weakness with which they submitted to removable hardships and indignities, for their harsh treatment of one another, for their keeping of women in ignorance, for their allowing greed to prevail over patriotism, for their slowness to acquire the sanitary habits without which urban life could not be other than unclean and indecent. Most of all he was stirred by the condition of the depressed classes. He reminded his countrymen that they had no right to resent the arrogance of Europeans towards themselves so long as they tolerated the scandal of untouchability, and debarred millions of their own people from the most elementary privileges of common

social life. From the beginning also he saw that, until they attained to a greater measure of unity among themselves, they could neither gain nor use any kind of independence that could be permanent. Utterly devoid himself of sectarian jealousy or of petty race feeling, he looked upon all as his brothers. And because the greatest of all obstacles to national progress was the deep division between Hindu and Muslim, the cause of Hindu-Muhammadan Unity was from the first near his heart.

Finally, whatever programme of political action he was to adopt under the pressure of events, it was certain from the beginning that non-violence would be an essential part of it. In the course of time he was to be found entangled in, what seemed to others, unnatural alliances with men who by no means held his faith. But his position was always clear. He would work with men who were willing to accept non-violence only as a matter of policy and expediency, without sharing his belief in it as a moral and universal principle. But in this matter he never compromised. So long as they kept that policy, though it was only a policy, he would work with them—so long, but no longer. Perhaps in the end it will be proved that Mr. Gāndhī's greatest service to humanity has been precisely this application of the principle of non-violence to the solution of political differences.

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IV

MR. GANDHI'S SERVICE IN INDIA AS A LOYAL SUBJECT

THE story of Mr. Gāndhī's life from 1915 to 1919 is the story of a great disillusionment. For he began with a large measure of belief in British rule, and in the ideals which guided the Commonwealth. He said in 1915:

"As a passive resister . . . I discovered that the British Empire had certain ideals with which I have fallen in love, and one of those ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope for his energies and honour and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience. I think that this is true of the British Empire as it is not true of any other government. I feel, as you perhaps here know, that I am no lover of any government, and I have more than once said that that government is best which governs least. And I have found that it is possible for me to be governed least under the British Empire. Hence my loyalty to the British Empire."[1]

He gave his whole-hearted support to Britain during the War, and much personal service. He believed that her cause was just, and that defeat would mean ruin to India as well as to England. He also believed that for Britain and India to fight together was the surest road to the winning of independence. In a letter to the Viceroy he wrote:

[1] Address at the annual gathering of the Madras Law Dinner, in April, 1915.

"If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions and not whisper 'home rule' or 'responsible government' during the pendency of the War. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment; and I know that India, by this very act, would become the most favoured partner, and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past."[1]

To his countrymen he said:

"The gateway to our freedom is on the French soil." "My advice to the country would be to fight unconditionally unto death with Britain for victory, and agitate simultaneously, also unto death if we must, for the reforms which we desire."

He had confidence enough in British justice and in the sense of comradeship which common suffering had brought, to believe that the way would open to the independence within the Empire which he believed was India's right. By his own personal influence he raised a large number of recruits, and up to the end of the War he continued to exhort his countrymen to provide the inexhaustible army which India was able to supply.

It did not seem to him inconsistent with that loyalty, but rather the reverse, to protest against any official tyranny or intolerance. It was for the good both of the governors and the governed that injustice, when it occurred, should be resisted. But at first Mr. Gāndhī refrained from entering into active politics. He had given a promise to Mr. Gōkhalē, whom he regarded as his *rāja guru*, that he would not make any public pronouncements on Indian affairs until he had been a year in the country. Mr. Gōkhalē believed that some of the extreme views which he

[1] After the Delhi War Conference, 1918. Vide *Speeches and Writings*, p. 427.

had put forth in the pamphlet, *Hind Swarāj*, would injure him and the cause of reform, and that after further contact with things in India he might be induced to alter them. Mr. Gāndhī is not given to altering any views once he has adopted them. But he loyally obeyed. He made his home at Ahmedabad, in Gujarat, and there he founded his *Satyāgrahāśram*,[1] a kind of home or settlement, where the scholars, living in extreme simplicity and austerity and supporting themselves by hand labour, are trained to understand and to exemplify their master's principles.

Though Mr. Gāndhī in his crowded life has not been able to develop this āśram as he would have liked to, and though it expresses his idea only in a rudimentary form, yet it is so near his heart, and in its constitution illustrates so well his principles, that some account of it should help us to understand what, through all his activities, he has been aiming at. The managers of it, and those who after training are received as candidates, are expected to take the following vows:[2]

The first is the vow of truth. Indians have been accused of not having the courage to say "no," when they mean "no," if it is not likely to please those to whom they speak.

[1] *Satyāgraha*, literally "truth-taking," stands for *satyā-vrata-graha*, "the taking of a vow of truthfulness." The word is then used by Mr. Gāndhī for the whole group of vows which the inmates of the āśram take. *Āśram* meant in ancient India a hermitage, a group of huts belonging to *vānaprasthas*, hermits who resided in the forest. To-day it means any kind of refuge or settlement for social or religious purposes. Since satyāgraha includes ahiṁsā, the law of harmlessness, as conceived by Mr. Gāndhī, he sometimes uses it for his political use of ahiṁsā, "soul-force" as opposed to the violence of war; and satyāgraha, as the vow which covers ahiṁsā, is often inconsistently used as equivalent to that conception.—J.N.F.

[2] Vide *Speeches and Writings*, Appendix II.

But it is the foremost rule for members of the āśram that they should tell the truth, regardless of consequences.

The second is the vow of ahiṁsā,[1] or non-injury. And that means that it is forbidden to harbour an uncharitable thought about anyone who may regard himself as an enemy. The persons so dedicated must not resent injury, or desire that harm should come to an enemy, or use any violence even to guard the honour of those who are in his charge.

The third is the vow of celibacy. "Those who want to perform national service, or those who want to have a

[1] *Ahiṁsā*, "harmlessness," is a Sanskrit word, found originally as the name of one of the rules for the life of early Indian ascetics. They had to practise celibacy, poverty, truthfulness, etc., and among these ahiṁsā In its earliest use it meant, as defined by Macdonell, "abstention from injury to living things." The early ascetic was forbidden to destroy life in any form, whether animal or vegetable: to take fruit from a tree or pluck a few ears of corn was as much a breach of the rule as to kill an animal. Hence these ascetics had to receive all their food, cooked or uncooked, from others, unless they found leaves or fruits which had fallen from trees. Later, the rule against taking vegetable life fell into disuse, and the word came to mean "abstention from taking animal life." At first there was no rule against eating animal food any more than against eating vegetable food: otherwise the Buddha would not have eaten the pork which led to his death. Laymen killed the plants or animals on which the ascetics lived. But when the idea of ahiṁsā became restricted to the taking of animal life, people began to practise vegetarianism, so as to lessen the slaughter of animals. In Aśoka's inscriptions the trend towards vegetarianism is distinctly visible. Naturally, the word has also been used in rather wider senses: since the ascetic was expected to be gentle in speech and behaviour, and to conquer all desires for wealth, comfort and position, rough speech, abuse and fighting were inconsistent with his vows. He had therefore to be "harmless" in every way; and ahiṁsā was now and then used in that sense. Mr. Gāndhī's use of the term is, however, much wider still; for it covers the attitude of Tolstoy, the Society of Friends, and the conscientious objectors to war.—J.N.F.

glimpse of the real religious life, must lead a celibate life, no matter if married or unmarried."

The fourth is the vow of control of the palate. Mr. Gāndhī was dismayed by the elaboration of diet which Hindus had accustomed themselves to, and taught that no general self-control was possible unless men were satisfied with the foods which were necessary to maintain health, and denied themselves exciting and over-stimulating condiments.

The fifth is the vow of non-thieving. By this Mr. Gāndhī means that if we take anything which we do not need for our immediate use, and keep it, we are thieving it from someone else who needs it. So long as there are millions who lack food and clothing, no man can honestly keep anything which he does not really need. And from this there follows the vow of non-possession. Mr. Gāndhī is not a Communist, and has no desire to take away from the rich what they are not willing to give up. But possessions are a clog upon the spirit, and the ideal life is that in which they are reduced to the minimum.

To these vows there is added the obligation to adopt *śwadēshi* as a rule of life. And by this Mr. Gāndhī means, not only that it is wrong to import foreign luxuries, but that men should be satisfied generally with that which they themselves and their immediate neighbours can produce. He calls that one of the sacred laws of our being. He believes that nothing but harm has come from importing foreign goods, because it has impoverished the producers in the country, and has encouraged the wearing of materials made under conditions which are injurious to the workers. "When we find that there are many things that we cannot get in India, we must just try to do without them." It is even a duty to

support the village barber, however unskilful he may be, and the village merchant, however limited may be his wares, rather than seek more competent service from the city. It is because of this belief, mistaken though it may seem, that afterwards the wearing of *khaddar* became to him and to his followers a part of religion and a symbol of patriotism, and that he came not only to countenance but to command that burning of foreign-made clothing which seemed to others defiant of common sense.

There is one final rule of the āśram which, though it comes last, is really the presupposition of all, and is most characteristic of the master's mind—the rule of fearlessness. It is to Mr. Gāndhī most strange that men should fear. To fear he traces most of the weaknesses of his countrymen, and most of the ills from which they suffer. "I suggest to you," he says, "that there is only one Being—if Being is the proper term to be used—whom we have to fear, and that is God."[1] Through all his own career he has shown himself, in the face of many dangers and much suffering, to be entirely fearless. And he never wearies in urging his fellows to put away that which more than anything else keeps them from progress.

While the āśram at Ahmedabad was his home he spent much time in travelling all over the country, studying the actual conditions of the people, and everywhere receiving an enthusiastic welcome. He made himself the friend of the poorest. He travelled third-class, and has made the woes and grievances of third-class passengers his own, urging upon the railway companies that, as the third-class traffic was the most lucrative, more money should be spent in lessening the overcrowding and the other discomforts from

[1] Cf. speech delivered at the anniversary of the Gurukala, 1916; *Speeches and Writings*, p. 267.

which third-class passengers suffer. He also urged Indians to learn to practise courtesy in travel, and to resist bullying either from railway servants or from fellow-travellers. To every question he brought the light of an original and perfectly fearless mind. Where he found injustices he attacked them, by whomsoever they were committed, perfectly indifferent to any hatred or danger he might thereby bring upon his own head. He felt more and more keenly the wickedness of the ban upon that large section of the nation which was regarded as unfit for common life with the higher born, and frankly told his countrymen that they were not fit for swarāj so long as they tolerated the scandal of untouchability. During the War, besides doing his utmost to obtain recruits for the army, he occupied himself chiefly with urging social reform of various kinds, and with attacking such abuses as he found in the administration of government. He made many speeches, and was frequently an honoured guest at gatherings, both Indian and European. He spoke on social service to a large audience at Madras, urging that the great requirements for success in such service were truth and fearlessness, sanctified by religion and by a life divinely guided. He gave an address on śwadēshi before the Missionary Conference of the same city, suggesting with all courtesy that missionaries would serve the spirit of Christianity better by "dropping the goal of proselytizing and continuing their philanthropic work."[1] He spoke to various audiences of students, explaining his own social ideals, and urging them to the service of their country. Perhaps the most deeply interesting of his speeches was one delivered at Allahabad, on "Economic *versus* Moral

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 273.

Progress," in which, with something like prophetic fervour, he warned his countrymen against making material wealth their goal, and reminded them that the great teachers who had done most to mould the lives of men were all men who had deliberately embraced poverty as their lot. "I would have our leaders teach us to be morally supreme in the world."[1]

Mr. Gāndhī's instinctive and determined championship of all whom he believed to be oppressed is illustrated by the part he played in three well-known incidents, one in the year 1917, the others in 1918. The first is that known as the Champāranya incident. Mr. Gāndhī was determined to make a personal investigation into the condition of the Behar labourers on the indigo plantations. He was served with a notice to quit the district, lest his presence should endanger the public peace, a notice he declined to obey, expressing his willingness, as in earlier and later days, to suffer the penalty of disobedience. The result was that a Commission was appointed to enquire into the grievances of the labourers, with Mr. Gāndhī himself as a member of it, and that every disinterested person was convinced not only that there had been grave scandals, but that there was something inherently and incurably wrong about the whole system of indentured labour.

The second is the case of the famine in Kaira. The authorities believed that the failure of the harvest was not so complete as to require suspension of the revenue, except in a small number of cases. On behalf of the ryots it was claimed that Government had made a wrong estimate of the crops, and that distress was very much more severe than they would allow. Mr. Gāndhī

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 286.

and others took up the case, convinced themselves that the peasants were really unable to pay the assessment, and urged the authorities in some way to re-examine the extent to which famine conditions prevailed. The Commissioner, irritated, perhaps naturally, by the interference of outsiders in a matter of administration, declined. Here was a case of the weak against the strong, a case in which Mr. Gāndhī was persuaded that the weak were in the right, a case for the application of the principle of satyāgraha. The Commissioner would not suspend the collection of dues, and because Mr. Gāndhī believed that the exaction was wrong and illegal he urged the ryots to take a vow to refuse to pay. Two thousand five hundred of them took the vow, and kept it in spite of all persuasions and threats. Whether the authorities or the people were right in their estimate of the facts it is not for us to decide. That the people had a case would seem to be proved by the fact that the struggle ended in the issuing of orders for the suspension of the collection of revenue for a year. The essential thing is that Mr. Gāndhī, believing that the people were resisting a wrong, succeeded in nerving them to take a stand and assert their independence, and at the same time was able to restrain them from violence.

A third case of passive resistance was the Ahmedabad mill strike, the interest of which from the present point of view is that Mr. Gāndhī's conduct in it shows how strong a sense he has of the sacredness of truth, and of the impiety of breaking a vow. After an investigation Mr. Gāndhī, with two other arbitrators, came to the conclusion that certain terms were fair, and under his guidance the mill-hands took a solemn vow that they would not accept less. After twenty-two days the men began to weaken, and some of them were preparing to go back to work on

the mill-owners' terms. It seemed to Mr. Gāndhī unbearable that, even under the stress of hardship and suffering, men should break a vow which they had made before God; and in order to stiffen their resistance he himself took a vow that he would not break his fast until the terms asked for were granted by the mill-owners. He said:

"I am fully convinced that no body of men can make themselves into a nation or perform great tasks unless they become as true as steel, and unless their promises come to be regarded by the world like the law of the Medes and Persians, inflexible and unbreakable; and, whatever may be the verdict of friends, so far as I can think at present, on given occasions, I should not hesitate in future to repeat the humble performance which I have taken the liberty of describing in this communication."[1]

During these years Mr. Gāndhī was looking steadily for political reforms, in confident expectation that the end of the War would bring some clear advance, and he was wholly in sympathy with the party who kept urging upon Government the necessity for them. When it was announced that Mr. Montagu was coming to India to confer with the rulers and people on the subject of political reform, it was Mr. Gāndhī who devised the scheme of a monster petition in behalf of the Congress-League's scheme, and he himself organized with complete success the work of securing signatures in Gujarat. When the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published in July, 1918, he wrote a letter to the *Servant of India*, in response to a request from the Hon. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. This letter shows that, though he was not deeply interested in controversial politics, yet he considered the scheme an honest attempt to fulfil the pledge of Government, and advised

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 425.

that it should receive careful and sympathetic handling. It needed to be improved. He disliked the dual system in the provinces and feared that it would be fatal to the success of the scheme. He criticized what seemed to him the elaborate reservations in the scheme on behalf of British interests. He would reduce to a minimum the British element in the services, retaining only "those who may be needed for our instruction and guidance."

"No scheme of reforms can possibly benefit India that does not recognize that the present administration is top-heavy and ruinously expensive, and for me even law, order and good government would be too dearly purchased if the price to be paid for it is to be the grinding poverty of the masses. The watchword of our reform councils will have to be, not increase of taxation for the growing needs of the country, but a decrease of financial burdens that are sapping the foundation itself of organic growth. If this fundamental fact is recognized, there need be no suspicion of our motives, and I think I am perfectly safe in asserting that in every other respect British interests will be as secure in Indian hands as they are in their own."[1]

This letter, ending as it does in an appeal to support the cause of the Allies on the battlefields of France, shows that in those days Mr. Gāndhī had no hostility to Government, and that he believed in the honesty of British intentions towards India, and was prepared to co-operate in the introduction of any well-considered scheme for reform. The changes he desired were far-reaching, but they were wholly consistent with loyalty to the British Raj. He had by no means ceased to hope.

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 439.

V

THE PANJAB DISORDERS

THE story of Mr. Gāndhī's disillusionment has often been told by himself. Various causes were working to make the people of India restless. Prices were rising and famine had set hunger stalking through the land. Disease was claiming many victims. Muhammadans were wondering how the War was to end for Turkey. Nevertheless there were forces working the other way, and the road was still open to ordered but rapid progress in an atmosphere of considerable goodwill and trust. The change came with disastrous and dramatic suddenness, a change which ended in undermining the greater part of India's trust in the honesty of British intentions. The chief cause was the passing of the Rowlatt Act, now generally recognized to have been a blunder. Sedition there was in the land, some of it extreme and violent. But it was confined to a very few places and Government had already powers to deal with it. That the Act was not needed experience has proved, for it has never been put into force. The passing of it in the face of the unanimous protest of the whole country, in defiance alike of extremist and moderate opinion, at a time when an extension of self-government had been promised, made it seem the act of a Government cynically distrustful and hostile to freedom. It was doubtless unscrupulously and wickedly misrepresented, and the power it gave to injure any honest man was wilfully

exaggerated. But the fact remains that it was an unprecedentedly ruthless defiance of the sentiments of a people. And the whole of the bitter fruit of it has not even yet been harvested.

To Mr. Gāndhī it seemed that everything he cared for was at stake. From that moment he ceased to have any interest in the Reforms. He felt that nothing was to be hoped for from constitutional changes so long as the spirit of Government was that illustrated by the repressive legislation, and he lost faith in the sincerity of British promises to open the way toward self-government. He said, "I have a right to interpret the coming Reforms by the light that the Rowlatt legislation throws upon them, and I make bold to promise that if we do not gather sufficient force to remove from our path this great obstacle in the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we shall find the Reforms to be a whited sepulchre." Constitutional agitation having failed, he saw no method left but that which he had tried so often, that of satyāgraha, or non-violent opposition. Only this time it was to be on a national scale. It was the beginning of that policy of Non-Co-operation which, for good or evil, he was to follow to the end.

The first step was a request to his countrymen to take the following pledge, and stand by it whatever might happen:

"Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. 1 of 1919, and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. 11 of 1919, are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals, on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of those Bills becoming law, and until

they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a committee, to be hereafter appointed, may think fit; and further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person, or property."[1]

Mr. Gāndhī then toured over the country, addressing great audiences and explaining what was meant by satyāgraha and how it was to be applied. The 6th of April was appointed as the day when the pledge was to be taken, and a complete *hartāl*, or fast with suspension of all business, was to be observed. Mr. Gāndhī very earnestly desired that the speeches to be delivered on that day should be "free from anger or unworthy passion," and deprecated the use of any coercion, either for suspension of business or for fasting. At Delhi satyāgraha was observed on the 30th March, and there was an unfortunate collision between the people and the police. The magistrate called upon the crowd to disperse, and when it declined he gave orders to the military to use force of arms. Several were killed and more wounded. Nevertheless, afterwards a meeting of 40,000 people was held in perfect peace and quietness. Mr. Gāndhī on the information sent him believed that quite an unnecessary amount of force had been used, but, true to his principles, he held that the crowd ought to have submitted and dispersed. It was the first of many tragic incidents, which showed how dangerous a thing civil disobedience is to experiment in. Mr. Gāndhī said himself at the time, "Before being able to offer effective civil disobedience we must acquire habits of discipline, self-control and obedience." Yet he did not come to see, though many of his friends warned him, that to denounce the actions of Government before

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 442.

large crowds of uneducated people must inevitably lead to the violence he so sincerely deplored.

Much worse was to come. On the 10th April Mr. Gāndhī was arrested on his way to Delhi, sent back to Bombay, and forbidden to enter the Panjab or Delhi. He wrote to his countrymen, hoping that there would be no resentment about his arrest. "A departure from truth by a hair's breadth, or violence against anybody, whether Englishman or Indian, will surely damn the great cause the satyāgrahīs are handling."[1] But further disturbance was already breaking out. The action of Government in preventing him from entering Delhi had enraged the people of Ahmedabad, and serious riots occurred there, ending in the murder of innocent people, much destruction of property, and the necessity for the application of martial law to restore order. Mr. Gāndhī was genuinely and deeply distressed. He had intended by going to Delhi to seek re-arrest. He was convinced that, if the agitation had continued to be peaceful, the Rowlatt Act would have quickly been repealed. But violence had spoiled everything. He advised the people of Ahmedabad to do penance by a twenty-four hours' fast, and by subscribing eight annas a head for the relief of the families of those who had been killed. He himself fasted for three days. He advised that there should be a temporary suspension of civil disobedience. It was their immediate duty to help towards the restoration of law and order. And it is noticeable that, while at Ahmedabad retribution followed, and those who were guilty of murder and pillage were sternly punished, little bitterness was left in the minds of the people. Disorder had occurred and had to be suppressed.

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 469.

It was in the interest of all that criminal violence should be checked, and no decent person suggested that any injustice had been done.

It was very different with the disturbances which followed in the Panjab. It may be well to give some brief account of what happened at Amritsar, seeing that the disorders there made a profound impression upon Mr. Gāndhī, and, more than any other events of recent years, shocked and enraged the Indian people. Like other troubles of those days, they were among the results of the passing of the Rowlatt Bill. Meetings were held there to protest against that Act, and the most popular and influential of the speakers on that subject and on the Turkish peace terms were Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapāl. Two hartāls were held in the city, one on the 30th March, 1919, and a second on the 6th of April. Both were completely successful. All business was stopped. But there was no disorder, and Europeans passed unmolested among the crowds. The authorities believed however, not without reason, that serious trouble was brewing, and on the 9th of April the Panjab Government issued orders for the deportation from Amritsar of Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapāl. This order was acted upon the following morning, precautions having been taken against the danger of rescue, and to preserve peace in the city. The news of the deportation quickly spread; shops were closed; an angry and excited crowd gathered in the streets, and one portion of it tried to force a way to the Civil Lines, bent on seeing the Deputy Commissioner and protesting against the treatment given to their leaders. Attempts made by the magistrates and the Deputy Commissioner of Police to persuade the crowds to disperse, were fruitless. The pickets on duty were stoned. Finally, on two occasions

the order to fire was given, and about ten men were killed.

The crowd, now enraged the more, had already turned to destruction. Some brutal deeds were done. The manager and assistant manager of the National Bank were beaten to death, and their bodies burned on a pile of bank furniture. The manager of the Alliance Bank was murdered and flung from a balcony on to the street, where his body was burned. The Chartered Bank also was attacked, but armed constables arrived in time to save the European officers. A railway guard and an electrician were also brutally murdered. A lady missionary, bicycling to her work, was knocked down, beaten while on the ground, and finally left for dead. She was picked up by some Hindus, and carried into safety, so that her life was saved. Much property was destroyed. Attempts were made to interrupt communications and to isolate Amritsar. Telegraph and telephone wires were cut in many places. Damage was done to the railway and to the telegraph office. The goods yard was stormed and looted. A goods train at another station was looted by villagers.

The situation was undoubtedly grave. Some Indian gentlemen did their best to reason with the crowd, and Indian officers visiting the city volunteered their services to the officer at the Fort. But defiance to all authority was widespread in the city, and what began as hostility to Government ended in murderous antipathy to Europeans. It is not wonderful if at first the authorities believed that the outbreak was part of a general conspiracy to overthrow British power, although for rebellion in that sense no evidence has ever been produced. During the day the European women and children were taken to the Fort, where they spent many hours in extreme discomfort.

Late that night three hundred troops arrived from Lahore under Major Macdonald, and early on the 11th three hundred more. The Commissioner of the division had already come, and when Major Macdonald arrived he told him that the situation was beyond control, and handed over charge to him as in military command. On the evening of the 11th the Commissioner left for Lahore, and later Brigadier-General Dyer arrived and took over command. Quiet had already been restored. Such crowds as gathered were peaceably dispersed. On the 12th various arrests were made in connection with the crimes of the 10th.

On the morning of the 13th April, General Dyer went through the city and caused a proclamation to be read at a number of places, the people being summoned by beat of drum. The proclamation forbade residents to leave the city without a pass, forbade processions of any kind, and warned the people that any gathering of four men would be looked upon as an unlawful assembly and dispersed, if necessary by force. At one o'clock General Dyer heard that a big meeting was to be held at about 4.30 p.m. He did nothing to prevent it, but confined himself to planning measures to be taken if it were held. At 4 o'clock he was informed that the meeting was being held at Jallianwala Bagh, and immediately he marched to the place with a force of twenty-five Gurkhas and twenty-five Baluchis armed with rifles, forty Gurkhas armed only with kukris, and two armoured cars. The entrance being too narrow for the cars to pass, they were left outside. The Jallianwala Bagh is not a garden, but a rectangular piece of ground almost entirely surrounded by buildings, and with very few entrances or exits. A crowd of more than ten thousand were gathered at the other end from that by which General Dyer entered, and were being addressed by a man

on a raised platform. Without giving any warning, as he regarded the people as being assembled in defiance of a warning already given, he ordered his men to fire. They fired for ten minutes, until their ammunition was exhausted, upon a crowd none of whom had firearms, though some of them may have had sticks. Then he marched his men away to their quarters outside the city. The crowd began to disperse as soon as the firing began. Between three and four hundred were killed, and three times as many wounded.

General Dyer admitted that firing for so long was not necessary to make the crowd disperse, and that if more troops had been at hand the casualties would have been greater in proportion. In his statement he said, "It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect, from a military point of view, not only on those who were present, but more especially throughout the Panjab. There could be no question of undue severity." He did what he honestly believed to be his duty. But, in the words of the Secretary of State's Despatch on the Report of the Hunter Commission, "the gravest feature of the case against General Dyer is his avowed conception of his duty in the circumstances which confronted him." He had a difficult situation to deal with. It was his duty to restore order and to subdue violence. "But he was not entitled to select for condign punishment an unarmed crowd, which, when he inflicted that punishment, had committed no act of violence, had made no attempt to oppose him by force, and many members of which must have been unaware that they were disobeying his commands."

If the happenings at Jallianwala Bagh roused bitter indignation throughout the country, and were condemned

by at least a considerable section of European opinion, even deeper and more permanent resentment was stirred by the administration of martial law which followed at Amritsar, Lahore, and elsewhere in the Panjab. If riot and brutal murder had been followed by condign and stern punishment, there would have been no protest from any respectable section of the Indian public. But in many cases punishment was meted out in what seemed to many a vindictive and savage spirit. No useful purpose will be served by going into details here. It is perhaps enough to quote from the same Despatch words which, though they may sound to Indian ears too carefully measured and restrained, are in such a document weighted with grave condemnation.

"The instances cited by the Committee gave justifiable ground for the assertion that the administration of martial law in the Panjab was marred by a spirit which prompted —not generally, but unfortunately not uncommonly—the enforcement of punishments and orders calculated, if not intended, to humiliate Indians as a race, to cause unwarranted inconvenience amounting on occasions to injustice, and to flout the standards of propriety and humanity which the inhabitants not only of India in particular, but of the civilized world in general, have a right to demand from those set in authority over them. It is a matter of regret that, notwithstanding the conduct of the majority, there should have been some officers in the Panjab who appear to have overlooked the fact that they were administering martial law, not in order to subdue the population of a hostile country temporarily occupied as an act of war, but in order to deal promptly with those who had disturbed the peace of a population owing allegance to the King-Emperor, and in the main profoundly loyal to that allegiance."[1]

[1] For a summary of the happenings under martial law by a distinguished leader of the Moderate party, see Appendix I, page 114.

The slowness of Government to consent to any impartial enquiry made a bad impression in the country. Six months passed before the Hunter Commission was appointed, and when the report appeared, although it recorded the outstanding facts, it was regarded by Indians as a wholly inadequate representation and criticism. Meanwhile the Indian Congress had decided to conduct an independent enquiry. A sub-committee was appointed, which, under the leadership of Mr. Gāndhī, carried out a very searching investigation. Over 1,700 witnesses were examined, and much of the evidence was recorded. Their report was issued in April, 1920, some weeks before the report of the Hunter Commission was made public. The two reports will go down to history side by side. That either of them was wholly unprejudiced or without bias it would be difficult to maintain. Feeling ran high, and the whole character of British administration was on trial. But there was enough common to both reports to justify the indignation which spread through the country. For all Indians who were sensitive to injustice or had any pride of race, for all British people who were jealous for the honour of their own nation and government, 1920 was a year of humiliation and unhappiness.

VI

THE KHILAFAT QUESTION

MR. GĀNDHĪ has repeatedly avowed that the other main cause of his quarrel with the British Government was his sympathy with Indian Muslims in the distress and indignation caused among them by the Turkish Peace Treaty. It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine with some care his whole attitude to what is known as the Khilāfat question. The terms of the peace treaty were published on May 14th, 1920, together with a letter from the Viceroy to the Muslim people of India. Already, two months before, Mr. Gāndhī had issued a manifesto, in which he described the Khilāfat question as "an imperial question of the first magnitude." He then asserts his conviction that the Muslim claim was just in itself, and had the support of the Muslim Scriptures. Briefly put, the claim was that the Turks should retain European Turkey, and that the Sultan should control the holy places of Islam, and should have suzerainty over Arabia. He then discusses what should be done if these demands were not granted by the Allies. He rules out violence, and also any boycott of British goods. The method of warfare, open or secret, he declares to be impracticable. He would gladly persuade everybody that it is bad, but for the present rests his argument upon pure expediency. The only remedy left was that of Non-Co-operation.

The month after the terms were published Mr. Gāndhī wrote an Open Letter to the Viceroy, inviting him to lead an agitation against the treaty, and explaining his own position. From the beginning of the War, he wrote, he had interested himself in the Khilāfat question. He had seen how deeply moved the Mussalman world in London was when Turkey decided to throw in her lot with Germany. When he arrived in India, in 1915, he found the same anxiety and earnestness among Indian Muslims, and a growing distrust of British intentions. He had advised them not to despair, and to use restraint in the expression of their hopes and fears. Now all those fears were justified.

"The peace terms and your Excellency's defence of them have given the Mussalmans of India a shock from which it will be difficult for them to recover. The terms violate the ministerial pledges and utterly disregard Mussalman sentiment. I consider that, as a staunch Hindu wishing to live on terms of the closest friendship with my Mussalman countrymen, I should be an unworthy son of India if I did not stand by them in their hour of trial. In my humble opinion their cause is just. They claim that Turkey must not be punished if their sentiment is to be respected. Muslim soldiers did not fight to inflict punishment upon their own Khalifa or to deprive him of his territories. The Mussalman attitude has been consistent throughout these five years.

"My duty to the Empire to which I owe my loyalty requires me to resist the cruel violence that has been done to the Mussalman sentiment. So far as I am aware, Mussalman and Hindu have, as a whole, lost faith in British justice and honour."[1]

Thus Mr. Gāndhī convinced himself that the Muhammadan cause was a just one. In a speech delivered in the

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 512.

House of Commons on the 5th of January, 1918, the Premier had used these words:

"Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary, or to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race. Outside Europe we believe that the same principle should be applied."

And in a speech delivered in defence of his policy on the 26th of February, 1920, Mr. Lloyd George said that these words were part of a carefully prepared statement, agreed upon after full consultation with all parties. The terms finally offered were a violation of that pledge. The Turks were to be deprived not only of their suzerainty over Muslim lands further east, but of territory which belonged to them, and where Turkish inhabitants were in an overwhelming majority. Whatever was to be said about Turkish misrule, and Turkish treatment of Christian minorities, the actual terms seemed to Mr. Gāndhī to be grossly unjust, a cynical and unforgivable breach of faith. He has a considerable power of disbelieving what he wishes to disbelieve, and in this case he was not disposed to accept all that he was told about Turkish "atrocities," whatever evidence was offered, whereas he believed, unfortunately not without some reason, that a serious counter-charge could be brought against Greeks and Armenians. As events have proved, the Sèvres Treaty was a costly and lamentable blunder, and provided none of the conditions of a stable peace. Though the Indian Government shared some of Mr. Gāndhī's views, he did not believe that they had done all in their power to secure juster terms. A wrong had been done, and until it had been put right it seemed to him impossible to co-operate in any way with Government.

It is beyond question then that Mr. Gāndhī threw in his lot with his Muhammadan countrymen because he believed that their fight was a just one, and because it was an instinct of his chivalrous nature to resist injustice. He believed that their grievance was a religious one, and that their religious sentiments had been deeply hurt by the treatment offered to the Sultan as Kaliph of the Muhammadan world. He is prone to idealizing his friends, without much question whether the account which they give of their emotions is simple truth. He believed that the anti-Turk feeling in Europe was anti-Muhammadan feeling, which is at most only partly true, and that all Christian criticism of Turkish misrule was biased. And all religions being equally sacred to him, he could not but take the part of those who felt (as he believed) that their holiest possessions were at stake.

But if Mr. Gāndhī was assured that the Muhammadan cause was a just one, he had another reason of at least equal weight for espousing the Khilāfat cause. He saw in it an opportunity for promoting that Hindu-Muhammadan unity which is so near his heart. "Everybody knows," he said, "that without unity between Muhammadan and Hindu no certain progress can be made by the nation." If India is to be the home of one great nation, then each of the communities must learn to make the troubles and real grievances of the others its own. Nothing is more often asserted than that the antagonism between these two religions, and the adherents of them, is an ultimate fact which makes it impossible that India can ever become the home of a united nation. Nothing, it is said, but the hand of a foreign power can keep them within one political system. Let that hand be lifted, and the old strife will be renewed to the death. Therefore, every reformer and

patriot must desire that, under the inspiration of some truly national feeling, the two communities should come progressively to feel that they are one.

If, therefore, the Hindus were to espouse the cause of the Khilāfat, and make the Muhammadan grievance their own, it would do much to win tolerance and respect for the Hindus from their Muhammadan neighbours.

"It is a question, then, for the rest of the Indian population to consider, whether they want to perform a neighbourly duty by their Mussalman countrymen; and if they do, they have the opportunity of a lifetime, which will not occur for another hundred years, to show their goodwill, fellowship and friendship, and to prove what they have been saying for these long years, that the Mussalman is the brother of the Hindu."

So, also, in speaking of cow-protection, which is very near to his heart, he says:

"The way to save the cow is not to kill or quarrel with the Mussalman. The way to save the cow is to die in the act of saving the Khilāfat without mentioning the cow. . . . The question is, how many Hindus are ready, without bargaining with the Mussalmans, to die for them and their religion. If the Hindus can answer it in the religious spirit, they will not only have secured Mussalman friendship for eternity, but they will have saved the cow for all time from the Mussalmans."[1]

There is no reason whatever to doubt the sincerity of Mr. Gāndhī's faith in the justice of the cause he so espoused. Up to a point most sensible men will agree with him. But he is not only a patriot and an ascetic, but a very shrewd politician as well. There is as little doubt that, in lending the whole weight of his personal prestige and moral influence to the Khilāfat movement,

[1] *Young India*, May 18, July 28, and Oct. 20, 1921.

he acted under the belief that by that policy Muhammadan consent could best be gained to the campaign for Indian self-government. There is nothing blameworthy in that. Nevertheless, the question remains whether Mr. Gāndhī did not give artificial force to an agitation which was only partly reasonable and partly sincere.

By his own confession, then, it was mainly these two series of events, the Amritsar disorders and the matter of the Khilāfat, which changed Mr. Gāndhī's attitude to one of complete disbelief in the British Government. It will be well to quote his own words in a letter to the Viceroy, written on August 1st, 1920:

"Events that have happened during the past month have confirmed me in the opinion that the Imperial Government have acted in the Khilāfat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral, and unjust manner, and have been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend their immorality. I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a Government.

"Your Excellency's light-hearted treatment of official crime, your exoneration of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Mr. Montagu's Despatch, and, above all, the shameful ignorance of the Panjab events and the callous disregard of the feelings of Indians betrayed by the House of Lords, have filled me with the gravest misgivings regarding the future of the Empire, have estranged me completely from the present Government, and have disabled me from rendering, as I have hitherto whole-heartedly rendered, my loyal co-operation.

"In my humble opinion the ordinary method of agitating by way of petitions, deputations, and the like, is no remedy for moving to repentance a Government so hopelessly indifferent to the welfare of its charge as the Government of India has proved to be. In European countries condonation of such grievous wrongs as the Khilāfat and the Panjab would have resulted in a bloody revolution by the people. They would have resisted, at all costs, national

emasculation. Half of India is too weak to offer violent resistance, and the other half is unwilling to do so. I have therefore ventured to suggest the remedy of Non-Co-operation, which enables those who wish, to dissociate themselves from Government, and which, if unattended by violence and undertaken in an ordered manner, must compel it to retrace its steps and undo the wrongs committed; but, whilst I pursue the policy of Non-Co-operation, in so far as I can carry the people with me, I shall not lose hope that you will yet see your way to do justice."[1]

Elsewhere he wrote:

"The difficulty of Englishmen lies really in believing that their rule is wholly an evil for India, i.e. it has made India worse in everything that counts. India is poorer in wealth, in manliness, in godliness, and in her sons' power to defend themselves. It is sinful to coquet with evil. There is no meeting-ground between good and evil, God and Satan. I have considered for thirty years, and been driven to the conclusion that British rule in its present form has proved a curse to India."

"I consider that I would be less than truthful if I did not describe as satanic a Government which has been guilty of fraud, murder and wanton cruelty; which still remains unrepentant and resorts to untruth to cover its guilt. I really believe that I am performing the office of a friend by denouncing in precise language the pretensions of a Government which has nothing to commend itself to the people under its charge."[2]

This is Mr. Gāndhī's own account of how he has been led to adopt the policy of Non-Co-operation. If a Government is criminal, it is criminal to co-operate with it. He is remorselessly and mercilessly logical. Once he has reached a conviction on what seem to him adequate grounds it becomes unshakable. If it be a weakness to question

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 45. [2] *Young India*, Jan., 1921.

one's conclusions, it is a weakness Mr. Gāndhī is singularly free from. In this case he saw his way with perfect clarity. In his judgment Government had ceased to be worthy of support. Violent resistance would only lead to worse repression and suffering. Moreover, Mr. Gāndhī sincerely believes that violence is wrong as well as impolitic, and that his cause is far too great and sacred to be sullied by it. But if the nation as a whole could be induced to cease to co-operate with Government in any way, government would become impossible, and swarāj would be at hand.

VII

NON-CO-OPERATION

THE most signal proof of Mr. Gāndhī's growing influence was that, having reached these conclusions for himself, he was able to impose the policy of Non-Co-operation upon millions of his countrymen, and upon the National Congress. It was a fateful decision, and it was not reached without determined opposition from men who believed that the adoption of Non-Co-operation was a false step, which would not advance the cause of India's freedom. But Mr. Gāndhī triumphed over all opposition. If he lost the confidence of some of India's wisest men he carried with him the bulk of the literate classes, and established a personal ascendancy over the masses which is unexampled in Indian history. In preparation for the Special Congress in September, 1920, he delivered great speeches about Non-Co-operation in various parts of the country, and week by week articles appeared in *Young India*, explaining it and answering objections. At the Congress itself, in Calcutta, his success was complete. In the Subjects Committee he carried his resolution by a small majority against the opposition of such men as Mr. C. R. Das and Mr. B. C. Pal, of Mrs. Besant, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah, and on some points even of the President, Mr. Lajpat Rai. At the Congress itself his motion was carried by a majority of 1,855 to 873.

Over 2,000 delegates did not present themselves, and 64 of those present did not vote.

After reference to the Khilāfat question and the Panjab disorders, the resolution ran as follows:

"This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without the redress of the two aforementioned wrongs, and the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of *swarājya*. This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course open to India but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive non-violent Non-Co-operation until the said wrongs are righted and swarājya is established.

"And inasmuch as a beginning should be made by the classes who have hitherto moulded and represented opinion, and inasmuch as Government consolidates its power through titles and honours bestowed on the people, through schools controlled by it, its law courts and its legislative councils, and inasmuch as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice compatible with the attainment of the desired object, the Congress earnestly advises:

"(*a*) Surrender of titles and honorary offices, and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies;

"(*b*) Refusal to attend Government levees, durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials or in their honour;

"(*c*) Gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by Government, and, in place of such schools and colleges, establishment of national schools and colleges in the various provinces;

"(*d*) Gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants, and establishment of private arbitration courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes;

"(*e*) Refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;

"(*f*) Withdrawal by candidates of their candidature to the reformed Councils, and refusal on the part of voters to

vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice, offer himself for election;

"(*g*) The boycott of foreign goods.

"And inasmuch as Non-Co-operation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice, without which no nation can make real progress, and inasmuch as an opportunity should be given in the very first stage of Non-Co-operation to every man, woman and child, for such discipline and self-sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of śwadēshi in piece-goods on a vast scale; and inasmuch as the existing mills of India, with indigenous capital and control, do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, this Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale, by means of reviving hand-spinning in every home and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement."

In moving the adoption of this scheme, Mr. Gāndhī made the assertion, so often to be repeated, that if a sufficient response were made to it swarājya would be gained in the course of one year. It is noteworthy that the only reference to the Reforms in his speech was this:

"I now come to the burning topic, namely the boycott of the Councils. Sharpest differences of opinion existed regarding this, and if the house has to divide on it, it must divide on one issue, namely whether swarājya has to be gained through the Councils, or without the Councils. If we utterly distrust the British Government—and we know that they are utterly unrepentant—how can you believe that the Councils will lead to swarājya, and not tighten the British hold on India?"[1]

The Congress was indeed at the parting of the ways. Britain had offered the Reforms as the first step on the

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 547.

road to responsible government. Thousands of Indians were prepared to accept them, and the officials were pledged to work them honestly to their designed end. It is not difficult to see why Mr. Gāndhī would have nothing to do with them. There was much to justify his distrust. Neverthless, it was a very serious decision to make, and at least some of its results have been disastrous. When all is said, as things are, swarāj can only come to India by the conversion of Britain to the belief that it is in the interest of the people of India that it should come. It is conceivable that by general and consistent non-violent non-co-operation Britain might have been converted; for it would have been an impressive protest against the blunders and moral deficiencies of British rule. But it is doubtful whether the kind and degree of non-co-operation which did result convinced anyone that India was ready for self-government. And in the meantime everything was done to discredit those Reforms, which, however inadequate they might prove to be, were an honest attempt to meet India's need, and to prepare the way for independence within the British Commonwealth, while obloquy was thrown, though not by Mr. Gāndhī, upon those who found in membership of the Councils a road to the service of their country.

But Mr. Gāndhī and his followers had no misgivings. The victory at Calcutta was followed by one more overwhelming still at the regular Congress at Nagpur in December. The creed of the Congress itself was changed into "the attainment of swarāj by the people of India by peaceful and legitimate means," without any reference to the permanence of the British connection. Mr. Gāndhī had won over to his view many of those who had at first been opposed to it, and with the added prestige which his victory gave him, and with a prophetic fervour

all his own, he went about preaching everywhere the gospel of Non-Co-operation. He was wholly unsparing of himself, accepting the homage which everywhere met and embarrassed him not as a tribute to his person, but as a growing recognition by the people that the way he showed them was the road to peace and freedom.

Only the briefest résumé can be given of the events of the next fifteen months. They were such as might have been foreseen. The propaganda to which Mr. Gāndhī devoted himself, with untiring energy and with a clearness of conviction unclouded by any doubt, resulted necessarily in rousing the people to increasing hostility to Government. All his great qualities, his disinterestedness, his personal simplicity of life, his care for all who suffered from oppression, gave him and his words enormous influence. When he told unthinking multitudes that the Government was satanic, they believed him. The spirit of lawlessness spread through the land. Though he preached non-violence, not without lasting results, yet again and again violence broke out, to Mr. Gāndhī's intense grief. To most people it seemed inevitable that it should. But that it was inevitable he would never acknowledge. A Government charged with the duty of preserving order was patient with all agitation which did not actually lead to a breach of the public peace. But disorder and violence had to be put down with a strong hand. In the end, rightly or wrongly, Government saw no alternative but interfering with the liberty of the leader himself, who had brought into being forces of unruliness which he was not able to control.

Through all these months Mr. Gāndhī worked in close co-operation with the Khilāfat organizations, and in particular with the Muslim leaders, Muhammad and

Shaukat Ali. He had made the Khilāfat cause his own, and now that he had captured the whole machinery of the Congress he was able to unite its forces with those of the Khilāfat committees. He convinced himself that, though they did not share his views on non-violence, they were as pure-minded and religious as himself. They toured the country together, and no doubt Mr. Gāndhī did something to restrain his friends from violent speech. He was of immense value to them; for his high reputation gave the Muslim cause a respectability and strength which it might not otherwise have possessed, and screened it at times from interference by the authorities; and, on the other hand, the strength of Muhammadan religious sentiment gave to the Non-Co-operation movement an intensity and fire which it might have lacked. How far the alliance was holy and natural is another question. It imported into the agitation more racial hatred than there would have been, and it increased the danger that agitation might cross the boundary which divided it from open revolt.

When Lord Reading arrived, the famous interview took place between the new Viceroy and Mr. Gāndhī. One of the results of that interview was that the Ali brothers were induced to express their regret for certain speeches which, in the opinion of many, had a "tendency to incite to violence," and induced also to undertake not to advocate violence so long as they were associated with the movement of non-violence. The Viceroy, on his part, promised that so long as this undertaking was kept there would be no prosecution. But later in the year the extreme section of the Khilāfat Non-Co-operators began to throw prudence to the winds. The Muhammadans in the country were disturbed by the Greek offensive against Angora, and by the strained relations between the Turkish Nationalists

and the British Government. At the Khilāfat Conference at Karachi, in July, the Ali brothers spoke with extreme violence, proposing that, if no settlement of the Khilāfat question were reached by Christmas, the National Congress at Ahmedabad should proceed to declare an Indian republic. They also called upon Muhammadan soldiers to desert. Though this action added to Mr. Gāndhī's difficulties and weakened the cause of Hindu-Muhammadan unity, yet he remained loyal to his friends, and when the brothers were tried and condemned, he asserted his belief that the Ali brothers did not really intend to give up the principle of non-violence, and that there was nothing inconsistent with the Congress creed in the advocacy of independence.

He was himself entirely faithful to the principle of non-violence, and was personally strongly opposed to the idea of severing the British connection. He lost no opportunity of impressing upon his countrymen that there must be a moral preparation for swarāj, and that until they learned to exercise self-discipline, and to practise brotherhood among themselves, and to give up all mill-made clothing, they could not attain their end. Much which he included in his programme was most truly in the interest of progress. The development of cottage industries, by which cultivators could fill up spare hours and add to their income, could do nothing but good. Homespun cloth is a good substitute for the cheaper kinds of imported cloth. Temperance reform was needed. Yet the attempts made to hinder the use of liquor shops, and to boycott those who dealt in or used foreign cloth, led in many places to intolerable intimidation and to disturbance of the peace. Mr. Gāndhī shocked and alienated numbers of people by the bonfires which he incited

people to make of imported garments. It seemed a wicked waste at a time when many poor people were naked. But Mr. Gāndhī is severely logical. Convinced that India can do without foreign cloth, and that its importation has impoverished her people, he had no hesitation in urging that the unclean thing should be destroyed, certain as it seemed to others that the result would be to provoke lawlessness and to inflame hate.

As the months passed it became more and more evident that Mr. Gāndhī was awaking forces of disorder far beyond his power to control. Though he did not wish it, his propaganda led to the inflaming of racial hatred. The distinction which he was able to make between a system, and the persons who have to administer it, was beyond the wit of the average man, and constant abuse of Government naturally led to open disorder. During the year there were as many as sixty outbreaks in different parts of India, due in large measure to the unrest caused by the Non-Co-operation campaign. There were agrarian riots, and strikes leading to riots. The most common cause of disorder was the violence following upon the arrest of "national volunteers" for breach of the law. At Giridih (Behar) a mob of 10,000 people looted the police station and burned the records. At Malegaon a peculiarly brutal outrage followed upon the trial of some Khilāfat workers for intolerable terrorism, and resulted in the murder of a sub-inspector and four constables. In Assam thousands of labourers were persuaded to break their contracts and try to make their way home to the villages, often far away, from which they had originally come. There were labour troubles in Madras, and riots arising out of aggressive picketing of liquor shops in Dharwar and Karachi.

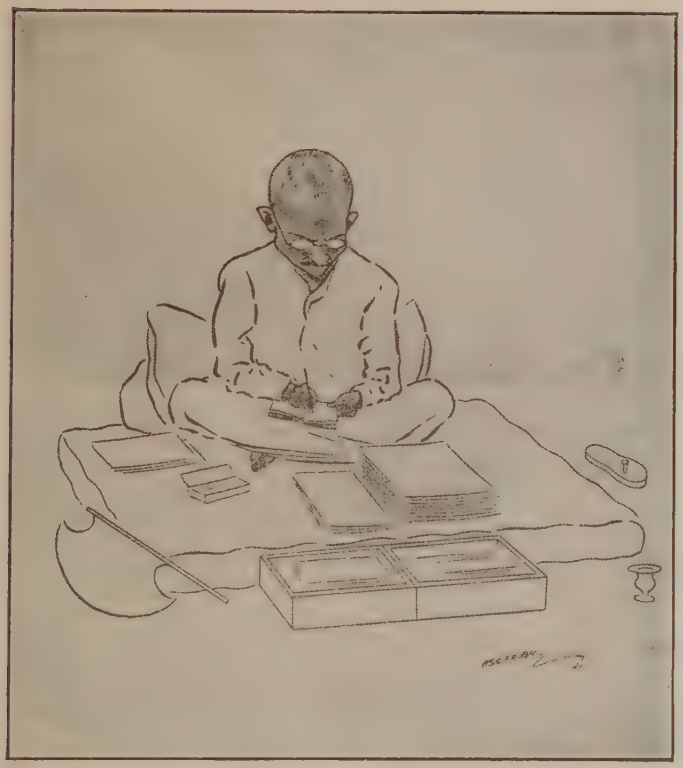
But much the most dreadful outbreak was that among the Moplahs on the Malabar Coast. The Moplahs are fanatical Muhammadans of mixed Arab and Indian descent, and always have been subject to waves of religious mania. On this account the country has for many years been administered under a special law. Government tried to exclude the Khilāfat preachers from the Moplah district. But excitement was stirred and spread. Arms were secretly collected, and preparations were made to bring in the kingdom of Islam. In August rebellion broke out through the whole district. The administration was paralysed. The few Europeans who did not escape were murdered. But the chief sufferers were the helpless Hindu inhabitants, who, until authority was re-established, suffered unspeakable barbarities. "Massacre, forcible conversion, desecration of temples, foul outrages upon women, pillage, arson, destruction, were freely perpetrated." There is no doubt that it was largely an agrarian outbreak, a revolt of landless men against their Hindu landlords. All the worst injustices due to social inequality and to an even unusually rigid system of caste exclusiveness were rife among them. Trouble was never very far away. The conditions of a peaceful community life did not prevail. It was the sense of past wrongs which, when the pot did boil over, led to such monstrous savagery. But there can be as little doubt that the explosion of angry discontent, which might have come sooner or later in any case, was precipitated and spread more widely by the general Khilāfat and Non-Co-operation agitation. Certain Khilāfat leaders tried to make out that it was a fight conducted by the Moplahs for their religion. Even Mr. Gāndhī, accepting information only through certain channels, spoke of "the brave, God-fearing Moplahs," who were fighting for what they

considered as their religion, and in a manner which they considered religious.[1] He treated the whole terrible business as irrelevant to his campaign, and, refusing to open his eyes, went on his way. There is nothing in his whole career more difficult to understand and to vindicate.

In November, 1921, the Prince of Wales arrived. In spite of the Viceroy's declaration that the Government had never intended to use the visit for any political purpose, Mr. Gāndhī appealed to his countrymen not to join in demonstrations of loyalty. He was careful to make it plain that they had no ill will to the Prince as a man, and appealed to everyone to take precautions to shield his person from harm. But he believed that the visit would be exploited to add prestige to a satanic Government, and to exalt the bureaucracy. It seemed to him unpatriotic and false to join in the festivities.

Mr. Gāndhī's motives were clear, and they were not dishonourable. He had a right to say that he harboured no ill will. No less rancorous spirit ever was. But strategically it was a fatal mistake. Already the boycott of the Duke of Connaught at the beginning of the year had alienated the friends of order. And what could only seem in England a gross discourtesy to a beloved prince irritated the British public, and materially lessened sympathy with Indian aspirations. It conveyed, too, a false impression. The completeness of the welcome was undoubtedly broken. In a few places the Non-Co-operators succeeded in restraining the people from any friendly demonstrations. In many places hartāls were proclaimed and held. In Bombay there was a bloody riot. But the Prince won from nearly all sections of the people enthusiastic goodwill. When he

[1] *Speeches and Writings*, p. 640. Cf. *Young India*, Oct. 20, 1921.



"MR. GĀNDHĪ, THE MAN OF THE MOMENT."
An English Cartoonist's Conception.

Reproduced from "Indian Business," July, 1921.
The artist was accorded the privilege of sketching Mr. Gāndhī at work in Bombay.

left Bombay he received a send-off such as had been rarely given to him anywhere. On the whole, and throughout India, the dissentients were in a small minority, and but for terrorism they would have been fewer still.

No one more than Mr. Gāndhī deplored the violence which broke the peace of Bombay on the morning of the Prince's arrival, and ended in the death of over fifty people and in serious damage to four hundred more. He made personal appeals to stop the disturbance, and as a penance for the ghastly tragedy he pledged himself to fast until peace was restored. He admitted his responsibility. "I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being a spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit."[1] Yet he did not materially change his policy, or retire from public life, as he is said to have offered to do. But he did suspend his intention of starting civil disobedience at Bardoli, and did his best to explain the conditions on which alone civil disobedience could be permitted.

Meanwhile, the last struggle with Government began. Government had been very slow to interfere with the Non-Co-operation movement, lest worse harm should come. But the outbreak in Bombay, followed by similar if less serious disorders in Calcutta and in the north, convinced them that stronger measures must be taken to prevent the growth of a dangerous spirit of anarchy. They determined to apply certain Acts conferring extraordinary powers upon the executive. The volunteer associations were declared to be illegal, and the provincial administrations were called upon to deal promptly with all violence. Many hundreds of volunteers, including many men of high

[1] *Young India*, Nov., 1921.

character and repute, were arrested and imprisoned, sometimes for interfering with peaceable citizens and causing riot, in most cases for no other crime than that of being admittedly members of an organization declared to be illegal. The situation was uncomfortable in the extreme. An attempt was made by such men as Pandit Madan Mōhan Mālaviya and Sir P. C. Ray to bring about a reconciliation between Government and the Non-Co-operators. But, as Mr. Gāndhī demanded as a preliminary to any conference the withdrawal of the recent proscription of the volunteer associations, and the release of all prisoners not actually convicted of violence, including the Ali brothers, and as, on the other hand, the Viceroy insisted that before even the idea of a conference could be discussed the unlawful activities of the Non-Co-operation party must be suspended, the project came to nothing.

Meanwhile, the annual meeting of the Congress was held at Ahmedabad. Mr. Gāndhī, though his influence in the country had begun to wane, had still unabated power with his followers. He became virtual dictator. He was appointed "sole executive authority of the Congress," and invested with full power to convene a special meeting of the Congress, and also with the power to appoint a successor in emergency. It is noteworthy that, while adamant to any suggestion that the campaign against Government should be stayed, Mr. Gāndhī fought stoutly against the notion, urged by Moulāna Hazrat Mohāni, of complete severance from Britain. Neither then, nor at any other time, did he cease to desire that the British connection should be maintained if it could be held to with honour.

In January, 1922, further attempts were made to mediate between Government and the Non-Co-operation

party. A conference was held in Bombay, presided over at first by Sir Sankaran Nāir. But it failed because a point had been reached at which neither the Government nor Mr. Gāndhī would yield. While the negotiations with the Viceroy were still going on, Mr. Gāndhī addressed to Lord Reading what was practically an ultimatum. He declared that civil disobedience had been forced upon the Non-Co-operation party to secure the elementary rights of free speech, free association and a free Press. He accused the Government of lawless repression, which had made immediate adoption of civil disobedience an imperative duty. But he announced himself willing to postpone that extreme action if the Government would agree to set free all prisoners convicted or under trial for non-violent activities, and to give up all interference with non-violent activities in the country. To this Government replied by a statement repudiating Mr. Gāndhī's allegations, and explaining why the measures complained of against the volunteers had been adopted, and giving plain warning that the adoption of civil disobedience must lead to measures of "sternness and severity." Mr. Gāndhī wrote again a letter of strong protest, accusing Government of lawlessness and barbarism, and reiterating his demands.[1] It is difficult to read these communications without feeling that the situation had become hopeless. It is possible to hold different views of the wisdom of the policy Government followed in dealing with the volunteer associations. But to Mr. Gāndhī's ultimatum no Government which had not abdicated its responsibility for maintaining order could yield. The choice was, according to Government, between "law-

[1] *Letters and Speeches*, pp. 666, 670.

lessness with all its disastrous consequences on the one hand, and on the other the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized Governments." According to Mr. Gāndhī the choice before the people was "mass civil disobedience with all its undoubted dangers, and lawless repression of the lawful activities of the people." He took high ground. He believed that he had behind him the mass of the people in an indignant protest against unjustifiable repression. He claimed to have presented his case with "extreme reasonableness and moderation." But an increasing number of his countrymen, though they still believed that he was sincere, could see neither reasonableness nor moderation in his demands, and felt that the inevitable end was drawing near.

Chauri-Chaura

Mr. Gāndhī proceeded to carry out his threat, and went to Bardoli to superintend the beginning of civil disobedience there. At that moment there came the news of a shocking outbreak at Chauri-Chaura, in the United Provinces, on February 4th. An infuriated mob of volunteers and peasants attacked the police station, beat to death twenty-one policemen and watchmen, and burnt down the building. The brutality of the crime horrified the country, and convinced Mr. Gāndhi that the plan of civil disobedience must be given up. He took it as a third warning from God that there was not yet in India "that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which can alone justify mass disobedience," the first warning having been the disturbances which followed the passing of the Rowlatt Act in 1919, and the second the Bombay riots in November, 1921. Why, precisely then, his conviction became final, many both of his

followers and of his opponents could not understand. He was freely accused of having brought humiliation upon the national cause. But, as always, he had the courage of his convictions. He wrote:

"Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue ourselves."[1]

For personal cleansing he imposed upon himself a five-days' fast.

At a meeting of the working committee, held at Bardoli on the 11th, he had his will. It was resolved to suspend civil disobedience and all other offensive activities, including processions, picketing and public meetings. The country was to confine itself to positive measures towards reform, to enlisting a crore of members for the Indian National Congress, to the production of hand-woven cloth, to the organizing of national schools, to the salvation of the depressed classes, and lastly to the organization of village and town arbitration committees for the private settlement of disputes. It was a complete *volte-face*, which dismayed and estranged the more extreme of his colleagues and followers. But he held firm. When the Bardoli resolutions were considered by the Congress Committee at Delhi, he had indeed to submit to certain modifications. But in his own mind, and ultimately in the general mind, the Bardoli programme became the fixed policy of the Congress. Neverthless, it was becoming clear that his influence was declining. Many of his friends, Hindu and Muhammadan had little sympathy with his uncompromising preaching of non-violence. Others were

[1] *Young India*, Feb. 16th, 1922.

perplexed and made uncomfortable by the constant change of programme. The people were disappointed because the swarāj he had promised was no nearer, forgetting that they had not fulfilled the conditions without which he had always told them it could not come. The upper classes saw the danger of Non-Co-operation, and were afraid of grave, widely-spreading disorder. Without ceasing to reverence the character of the man, an increasing number came to doubt the wisdom of his policy.

There can, we think, be little doubt that this decline of Mr. Gāndhī's personal influence was one reason why the news of his arrest, on the 10th of March, was received throughout the country with such quietness. The other reason was of a completely opposite kind. It was that Mr. Gāndhī had succeeded in winning the minds of many of his countrymen to a sincere belief in non-violence. The tragedy of Chauri-Chaura had helped towards that end. Ever since then the mind of India has been turning away from violence as a remedy for wrongs. When their master told them to remain quiet, whatever happened to him, they obeyed. "I would regard the observance of perfect peace on my arrest as a mark of high honour paid to me by my countrymen."[1] That honour they gave him, bitterly as many of them resented the fact of his imprisonment. To himself there can be little doubt that it brought a welcome rest. His indomitable spirit was housed in a very frail body, and the incessant labours and excitements of the last months had been a strain which few stronger men could have endured.

There have not been many more remarkable trials in the history of mankind. Perhaps there have been only two.

[1] *Young India*, March 9th, 1922.

It was conducted with the most perfect dignity and courtesy, with the utmost consideration of the character of the accused. He pleaded guilty. He read a statement explaining why he had become a Non-Co-operator. It ended with these words:

". . . I have no personal ill will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which, in its totality, has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a brief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system. And it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

"In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England, by showing in Non-Co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil, and that, as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the judge and the assessors, is either to resign your posts and thus dissociate yourselves from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent, or to inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country, and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal."

The judge, Mr. C. N. Broomsfield, I.C.S., then pronounced the following sentence:

"Mr. Gāndhī, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless, what remains, namely the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely ever to try.

"It would be impossible to ignore the fact that in the eyes of millions of your countrymen you are a great patriot and a great leader; even all those who differ from you in politics look up to you as a man of high ideal and of noble and even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only. It is not my duty, and I do not presume, to judge or criticize you in any other character. It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be a grave offence against such law. I do not forget that you have consistently preached against violence or that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence.

"But having regard to the nature of your political teaching and the nature of many of those to whom it was addressed, how you can have continued to believe that violence and anarchy would not be the inevitable consequence it passes my capacity to understand. There are probably few people in India who do not sincerely regret that you should have made it impossible for any Government to leave you at liberty. But it is so. I am trying to balance what is due to you against what appears to me to be necessary in the interests of the public, and I propose in passing sentence to follow the precedent of the case, in many respects similar to this case, that was decided some twelve years ago, the case of Mr. Bāl Gangādhar Ṭilak, under the same section. The sentence that was passed

"MAHĀTMĀ GĀNDHĪ, THE SPINNER OF A NATION'S DESTINY." 1922.

From an original painting by Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, in the collection of Sijukta Rupkrishna of Lahore.

By permission of Mr. G. N. Tagore.

upon him as it finally stood was a sentence of simple imprisonment for six years. You will not consider it unreasonable, I think, that you should be classed with Mr. Ṭilak, and that is the sentence—two years' simple imprisonment on each count of the charge, six years in all—which I feel it my duty to pass upon you.

"I should like to say in doing it that, if the course of events in India should make it possible for Government to reduce the period and release you,[1] nobody would be better pleased than I."

[1] See Appendix II, "Release of Mr. Gāndhī," page 118.

VIII

THE VALUE AND EFFECT OF MR. GANDHI'S NON-CO-OPERATION CAMPAIGN

THE time has not come to assess the value of Mr. Gāndhī's services to his countrymen. Many years must pass before the events of recent days can be seen in due perspective. But an attempt may and should now be made to estimate the rightness of that policy of Non-Co-operation which he adopted with such conviction and pursued with such determination, and also to ask what its effects have been upon the life of India. His reasons for adopting that policy were very simple, and he has set them forth times without number. The first was that the Government had become wicked, and therefore it was wrong to co-operate with it. The second was that non-co-operation was the best and quickest method of bringing that Government to an end. For if non-co-operation became general the alternative before Government would be nothing but despotic rule pure and simple, and that no party in Britain would support. Therefore, he added, "the taking of the steps suggested by me will constitute the peacefullest revolution the world has ever seen."

The first question then is, Was he right in despairing of the British Government? Was this judgment wholly fair and sane? Strong temptation, without doubt, he had. It was difficult for any Indian not to despair of justice

from rulers who could follow up a promise of responsible government by passing an Act touching civil liberty, in spite of the indignant protest of all articulate Indian opinion, and who did not instantly repudiate and utterly condemn the methods by which disorder was crushed out in the Panjab. To Mr. Gāndhī it all seemed part of a deliberate policy. He had no quarrel with the British or with the British Constitution. But British government in India, as he saw it, was no longer in consonance with what he believed to be British ideals of justice and liberty. The earlier rulers dared to look forward to a time when their trusteeship should be ended, and the Indians should resume the task of governing themselves. But the Mutiny had shaken that sanguine faith. In the interval there had grown up a tacit assumption that the trusteeship was to be perpetual, and that the only hope of efficient government for India was that a British bureaucracy should have full and continued sway. "British rule in India had concentrated so largely on mechanical efficiency that it had gradually lost sight of the older and finer principles of Anglo-Indian as well as of British statesmanship, based on the paramount importance of co-operation between British and Indians." It seldom crossed the minds of the administrators that possibly efficiency of the Western kind was not what Indians wanted, that no foreigners had any right to force it upon them, and that it might not be the best thing for them. Hence it is that, though served by admittedly the finest body of public servants in the world, the Government of India has been guilty of the crime of being too late. When all is said, that is the head and front of their offending. The slowness with which change has been introduced has irritated educated Indians, and worn their patience thin. Mistakes and defects could have been forgiven if the

people had felt confident that their claims were being fairly considered, and that the path was really being opened to responsible government. Delay turned faith and hope into bitter unbelief. With others, Mr. Gāndhī ceased to expect any good from the Government which he had once trusted.

There was reason for his disillusionment. Nevertheless, the question remains whether he did not begin his campaign with a failure to think justly of those whom he condemned. Many Indians and most Englishmen must feel that he did, even though they share to the full in his indignant condemnation of wrong. The Government is open to many strictures, but it is not satanic, unless all government is. The British are conscious that they desire to do justly, and that in the main, and throughout their connection, they have done justly. They do not expect Indians just now to acknowledge it, but they believe it to be generally true. They know that to-day they are seeking the good of India, and if they are not prepared to move so quickly as is demanded of them the reason is that they doubt whether it would be for India's good. They may be wrong. Their great fault is that they have not tried hard enough to understand the Indian mind, and have assumed too lightly that they knew best what India needed. But it is equally wide of the facts to accuse the whole system of being satanic, and to brand co-operation as essentially and necessarily unpatriotic.

The next question is, Granting that he was justified in despairing of Government, was the policy of Non-Co-operation a wise one? Was there from the beginning any hope of its being successful? If the people as a whole had adopted it, a great change of some kind would have followed. No power could continue long to govern a

nation that refused to co-operate. But first, should he not have been able to see that many of the people would not follow him, that many high officials would not relinquish their offices, that a majority of educated parents would not consent to deprive their children of education, that no general boycott of anything was likely to come to pass? Secondly, though non-violence was an essential part of his policy, should he not have been able to foresee that, especially as numbers of the people accepted it only as a policy without sharing his belief in it as a principle, non-co-operation would inevitably end in stirring up unruly passions, and lead to the violence he deplored? Both of these things happened. Was it not certain from the beginning that they would happen? The whole of Mr. Gāndhī's career is a proof of the sincerity of his repudiation of violence. But it is difficult to understand why, knowing as he did the danger of mob-violence, he did not, even after many warnings, regard that danger as a reason for changing his policy. Would he not have accomplished more if had had less to do with political expediency, and had refused to ally himself with those who, though willing to work with him for their own ends, were inspired by a different spirit? He might have wielded less immediate power. He might have been a voice crying in the wilderness. But he might have left a more permanent impression upon the history of India.

It is not suggested that, even as things are, Mr. Gāndhī's services to his countrymen have not been great. He has done what no other has been able to do. Non-Co-operation as a political programme may be judged to have failed. One by one the chief items in it have been dropped. The results he hoped from it have not come to pass. The people did not in sufficient numbers respond to the calls he

made upon them. It has not been proved to be a practicable or morally justifiable method of bringing about political change. Moreover, it has had two positively evil results. One is that it has led to widespread disorder, to a weakening of respect for law and order, and to an inflaming of racial hatred. The other is that it has brought disunion among those who at heart desire the same thing. An India united in aspiration and in policy could have what she wanted for the asking. But on the point of Non-Co-operation many of Mr. Gāndhī's countrymen part company from him. He has their hearts, but not their heads. They accept the Reforms, and believe that they can be worked or modified so as to bring nearer the day of swarāj within the British Commonwealth, whereas they see in the propaganda of Non-Co-operation nothing but an inevitable menace to the country's peace. It is not doubtful that Mr. Gāndhī chose the course which he believed to be the most right and the most hopeful. But it is of all things to be regretted that he did not strike a path on which all could have followed him without any blinding of judgment or surrendering of conscience.

Nevertheless, in spite of all which we believe to have been mistaken, and even mischievous, in his policy, he has done more than any other to evoke a new spirit in India, and to fit the people for that future upon which their hearts are set. He has set forces to work in the life of the land which will not cease to act, although for a time the effects may not come to the surface. There have been great public men in India in the last twenty years. But none of them has captured the imagination of the people as he has done, or done anything like so much to unite them in one determination to win freedom. He has done more in five years to create a sense of national

dignity and national responsibility than has been done by all the others together. He has helped men to a new independence, a new belief in their own strength. Even from districts where his influence seems to be declining there comes the testimony that, as a result of the Non-Co-operation movement, men are refusing to tolerate petty tyranny from subordinate officials. It is probable that no man in the world has so many followers. And if it is so, it is partly because they believe with devotion in his complete singleness of heart, in his self-denial and in his fearless courage. But it is partly also because he has taught them to believe in themselves, and stirred them from hopelessness and lethargy, and awakened in them new springs of energy. He has appealed not in vain to their manhood, and made them see that love for their country is but a hollow pretence if it does not urge them to self-forgetting service for its sake. However misdirected their enthusiasm may sometimes have been, it has this mark of reality about it, that they have been found willing to suffer. The wisdom of the moderate leaders may be unimpeachable, and it may be to their policy that the people will return at last. But if the nation has been roused from indifference, and if there is a beginning of preparedness for a new kind of national corporate life, it is due not to the counsels of the wise, but to Mr. Gāndhī and the preachers of his challenging creed.

With respect to more tangible results of the movement it is difficult to say much that is definite. Its effect upon the British people has probably been rather to alienate than to attract sympathy. It has convinced them that the desire for swarāj is more real and more widely spread than they believed. On the other hand, it was inevitable that much ill-feeling should be created on both sides. A movement which led to a partial boycott of British goods,

however justified, and to discourtesy to the Prince of Wales, could scarcely be expected to promote goodwill; and the effect, especially in England, has been unfortunate.

Of definite results in the direction of social betterment it is possible to speak more definitely. Without any doubt the forces making for temperance in the use of intoxicants have been stimulated. Picketing of liquor shops leads easily to violence, and it is a questionable method of winning men to give up drink. But the minds of the people have been awakened to the evil which intemperance is doing in the country, and public opinion has been ripened in favour of a policy of total prohibition.

Again, there is nothing about which Mr. Gāndhī feels and has spoken more strongly than the evil of untouchability. That evil has a history of centuries behind it, and its roots are deep in social custom. It would not be reasonable to expect that rapid advance could be made in a few years. But, without doubt, the conviction is spreading that it is an intolerable injustice, and that if India is to be a nation that injustice must be removed. There is at least a beginning of putting that belief into practice. The "national" schools and colleges have been opened to the untouchables as to others. The conscience of individuals has been stirred, so that a number of men of high caste have brought themselves to step across barriers which not long ago seemed to them to belong to the eternal fitness of things. Not a few have said, "We must no longer despise or refuse companionship with these people, because Mahātmā Gāndhī has shown us that it is wrong."

Perhaps the most conspicuous outward result of the movement has been the revival of a dying industry through

the encouragement given to the production and use of khaddar, or homespun cloth. The spinning-wheel has been introduced into thousands of cottage homes, and many lakhs of rupees, which would have been spent in buying foreign cloth, have been kept in the country. Many very poor people have been able to add to their income that small amount which raises them above the margin of penury. It may not be possible to admit all that is claimed for it. Few men of Western training can bring themselves to believe that, if human toil can be lightened by the use of mechanical inventions, any permanently useful purpose can be served by rejecting that aid. What can be as well done and more cheaply done by machinery will and should be so done. But even in Europe there is a place for hand work and for cottage industries. And Mr. Gāndhī makes out a strong case when he argues that in the present economic condition of India hand-weaving should be encouraged, and that the introduction of the *charka* into the homes of the peasants would do something to lift the burden of what seems to him almost hopeless poverty.

These are beneficial results, but they have nothing essentially to do with Non-Co-operation, and they may continue whether that policy is abandoned or not. Meanwhile it remains true that the movement as a whole has had certain social and moral consequences in the life of India which are of permanent value. It has carried with it an appeal to the conscience of the people, and awakened a new sense of self-respect. It has taught them to apply higher standards than those of expediency. Men and women who were accustomed to luxurious living have stripped their lives bare, and accepted hardness. Thousands have gone to prison for a cause which seemed to them that of honour and patriotism. Whatever may be thought

of the wisdom of their policy, it is impossible to withhold the recognition of their sincerity and courage. If among the people of India there is a greater readiness to accept responsibility, and a greater desire to do things for themselves, that is largely due to the spiritual energy of Mr. Gāndhī's propaganda.

A final question of great interest is that of how the progress of Christianity has been affected by the Non-Co-operation movement. It would not have been surprising if Mr. Gāndhī's condemnation of Western civilization, together with the strong nationalism which he has helped to evoke, had made Indians critical of a religion brought to them by men of Western races, and identified by them with foreign propaganda. That result has partly followed. In some quarters there has been less willingness to listen to Christian preaching, and a more critical attitude than formerly to the representatives of Western Christianity. During the last two years fewer people have bought copies of the Bible, having been warned that it was a foreign book, and that it was unpatriotic to read it.

Yet there is testimony from many sides that this is not the most frequent or characteristic result of Mr. Gāndhī's influence. It is said that, on the contrary, interest in Christ and in His teaching has been greatly quickened by Mr. Gāndhī's own confessed reverence for Him, and by the frequency with which he quotes His words. Missionaries from Mr. Gāndhī's own country report that where his influence has been strongest there is most readiness to hear Christian teaching. Elsewhere thousands who were wholly indifferent or hostile to Christ have begun to enquire and read about Him with respect. Lectures on the Person of Christ, and accounts of personal religion, are listened to by large audiences of educated men who a few years ago

would have turned a deaf ear. It is freely acknowledged that there is a change in the attitude of the Hindu community towards Christ. If Western civilization has fallen from esteem, it is recognized that its defects are due to the incompleteness with which Western men have followed the guidance of the religion they professed. Men are distinguishing between Christ and the inadequacies of average Christianity. India has a new desire to know who this is whom one of her own greatest sons holds in such high reverence.

The most remarkable proof of this is that, when Indians search for someone to compare Mr. Gāndhī with, it is not to any one of their own heroes that they turn, but to Christ. They have been impressed by his willingness to bear suffering for the cause he had espoused, and to take upon himself the full consequences of his actions, and also by his conviction that such willing suffering is more effective than any violence. And the idea is entering their minds that suffering may not be merely punitive, the consequence of evil-doing in former lives, but that it may be vicarious and be borne to bring good to others. That idea they do not find in their own Scriptures. But they find it in the New Testament. Very widely the trial and imprisonment of Mr. Gāndhī has turned their thoughts to the trial of Jesus. In his address to the National Congress, in 1923, the president, Mr. C. R. Das, quoted at length from the last chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew. This may seem to Christians exaggerated and even blasphemous. It is easy to show in how many ways the parallel fails. But, as Dr. Stanley Jones says, "the point is that Gāndhī is the ideal of millions in India, and yet they identify that ideal, not with Buddha or with Krishna, but with Christ." And he quotes these words of

a distinguished Hindu: "Mahātmā Gāndhī has by his trial done something that the missionary has not been able to do in fifty years, namely, he has turned the eyes of India to the Cross." If that be so, it may well be that when the time comes for writing the history of these years, and for estimating the work of the man, this will stand out as the greatest of the services which he has done to his countrymen.[1]

It is therefore impossible for anyone who has sympathy with the aspirations of the Indian people to desire that Mr. Gāndhī's influence should decline. He has this in common with all great leaders of men, that he possesses that incommunicable and largely inexplicable force which we call dynamic power. Where he is things happen. Where he goes things move. Before him difficulties disappear and new forces come into being. He has the faculty of inspiring others with his own faith, and shaming them out of fear. The sources of it are in his own clearness of vision,

[1] Dr. Stanley Jones, who for many years has been engaged in lecturing to educated men all over India on Christ and the central Christian doctrines, and who has found of late a greatly increased eagerness to listen, has written out of his personal knowledge a deeply interesting article on the present position of Christianity in India. He is convinced that "non-violent Non-Co-operation has put a new element into India's thinking which is decidedly Christian." He says, "Probably for the first time in human history a nation in the attainment of its national ends has repudiated force, and has substituted suffering, or what it calls 'soul-force.' Who can say this is not more Christian than the ordinary attitude we have taken in the West? When the matter of non-violent Non-Co-operation was being discussed in the Delhi Conference by all the leaders of the movement, a delegate from Bombay arose and said, 'I oppose this non-violent Non-Co-operation. I ask you, "Is it Hindu teaching?" It is not. "Is it Muhammadan teaching?" It is not. I will tell you what it is. "It is Christian."'"

and in the tenacity with which, having made up his mind, he abides by his determination. He sees without any clouding doubt the end which he is making for. And having chosen his path, nothing will make him waver. Again and again his friends have disputed the wisdom of his course. Sometimes those whom he revered most have tried to dissuade him. But upon the adamant of his resolution their arguments have beaten in vain. Few men have ever been more obstinate once a choice has been made. It is possible often to argue that he has chosen wrongly, but few can dispute that what makes his will so firm is the conviction that he is following the truth. As sincerely as Martin Luther he might have said, "I can no other."

It would be doing no service to Mr. Gāndhī to claim that he is free from human infirmities. No one would repudiate that claim more energetically than he himself. He has made many mistakes, and owned them, and done penance for them. There have been occasions when he has strained the faith even of some of his admirers in his complete sincerity. He has been on the dizzy heights of a popularity unexampled in our time, possibly in any time. One whose influence has for many months swayed millions of men, whose bare word has been accepted by them unhesitatingly as law, has passed through an ordeal by which it would be a miracle if he were wholly unscathed. How severe such a test is lesser men cannot even conceive. That he has passed through it without any disturbance of balance, any failure in self-judgment, any loss of humility or yielding to arrogance, we do not assert. Probably no one is able to judge. In the arena of politics it is notoriously difficult to keep the light burning and to follow it with eyes undimmed. This at least may be said, that, serious as his mistakes have been, there have been few

political leaders with whom Mr. Gāndhī need fear comparison.

In attempting to find any explanation for those actions and policies which are most difficult to understand, two things should be borne in mind. One is that Mr. Gāndhī is not only a religious-minded and disinterested patriot, but also an acute and even a subtle politician. He has inherited from a family of able administrators a keen political instinct. If he has ever given up a lesser it has been for the sake of a greater good. If ever he has acted without complete personal conviction, it has been when he has accepted a measure not in itself welcome to him, or wholly unassailable, for the sake of an end which was vital to him, such as the removal of the colour bar in Africa, or Hindu-Muhammadan unity, or cow-protection. To that extent—and it has always been a closely limited extent—he has been willing to compromise. It is, for example, difficult not to feel that he would have judged the Khilāfat agitation, serious as it was, somewhat differently if he had not seen in it an opportunity for winning Muslim sympathy, cow-protection and swarāj.

The other fact to be remembered is that this political instinct has to fight against an idealism in Mr. Gāndhī which has often neutralized it. Sometimes he seems to have quite lost touch with reality. People have wondered how he could persevere as he did in prophesying that swarāj could come within a year. The reason is that he actually does see things to be near which are quite beneath the horizon. About the conditions of swarāj he is quite clear-sighted. They are such as all men would admit. If they were realized swarāj could not be otherwise than achieved. Yet they are such as cannot quickly be realized. It looks as if he were deluding men. But that is too simple an explanation.

The truth is that he really does believe that what he sees so clearly, and desires so strongly, is near. And though that kind of vision does doubtless lead to disappointment, and even to disillusionment and loss of trust, yet it is also the secret of Mr. Gāndhī's power of sustaining the enthusiasm of his followers. What a man sees to be near, however far it be, he will do more than any other to bring near. He may be a dreamer, but he has actually accomplished more, done more to make real changes certain, and to overcome the inertia of his countrymen, than any other in India.

Everyone who wishes well to India must desire that Mr. Gāndhī's influence should continue. The movement will go on without him, but it will be a healthier movement and a more rapid one if his voice is heard and listened to. What is unpractical and illusory about it will be dropped out. Facts and laws will assert themselves. But so far as it is a movement towards real freedom and the attainment of a sturdier manhood it will and must make way. If Mr. Gāndhī could recover his faith in the Government and become willing to work with it through a difficult period of transition which is coming, hope would burn more brightly. For as a friend he could do more than any other. How that is to come about it is less easy to say. Until all grounds for doubting British good faith are taken away it is useless to complain of a want of sanity and generosity in the Indian attitude. It is easy to accuse Mr. Gāndhī of biased judgment. It would be more profitable to hasten to remove all that gives his criticisms their sting. It is no time for hesitation and delay. For the breach is widening, and a bitterness is growing which may lead to a permanent estrangement, to the loss both of India and of Britain.

At this juncture of the history of India and Britain it is a great asset that the man who most commands the allegiance of his countrymen is one who is without racial bitterness; who even when awaiting his trial could speak of the British with no shade of personal resentment, and defend his own views with the most perfect serenity and good humour; one who, by conviction an unbeliever in the use of force, can do more than any other to restrain his fellows from violence; one who, though fervently patriotic, does not even now desire to separate India from the British Commonwealth, provided that Commonwealth becomes a fellowship of free nations. It is also a testimony to the Indian character that the man whom Indians are most ready to follow is one who sets so high a value upon truth, and who calls them to a life of greater simplicity and self-denial. They may follow him but slowly, but that, and nothing lower, moves them to admiration.

Let it be once more repeated that what is at work in India and elsewhere to-day is a ferment caused by the contact of civilizations. The East has begun to desire to work out its own life and its own destinies without any interference from the West. So bewildering is the chaos brought about in Europe by a selfish imperialism and a narrow engrossment with material wealth, that Asia sees for the moment nothing noble in a civilization which has ended in such seeming bankruptcy. Men chafe at any kind of bondage to nations which have failed so signally to achieve happiness in their own lands, and begin to doubt whether any blessing at all has come to themselves from their contact with them. It is this which has given its vitality to the Muhammadan revolt against Western domination. "The Muslim looks upon Turkey as the only window left through which the Muslim world can let

in the sunlight upon the garden of its soul, untrammelled by Western interference as to the way in which it shall be done so as to produce the most effective illumination."[1]

In India Mr. Gāndhī is a voice calling to what is best in his own people, and recalling to them the greatest things in their ancient history. Not without reason he fears for them the effect of contact with a civilization which seems to him little but materialistic and irreligious. He would have them masters in their own house, that they may set their own house in order. He holds before them an ideal of simple industry, untainted by any luxury which is beyond the common lot, and of domestic piety. He tells them to put away all fear and to respect themselves. He bids them free themselves from those cankers which are justly made a reproach to them, and especially from abusing the caste system and treating millions of their countrymen as unfit for admission to the privileges of the common life. He sets his face as a flint against all cruelty and all uncleanness. For this national regeneration he cares with an eagerness which leaves little room for meaner ambitions. The particular policies he advocates may or may not be the wisest to bring that nearer. Time will show. We do not believe that in days to come it will prove possible or right to set barriers of any kind between nations, or to isolate any race from contact with others. We do not believe that any nation has a monopoly in any qualities. Mr. Gāndhī may discover one day that there is more idealism in the West than he knows. Europe is already discovering that she has much to learn from Asia. But, if a better world is to come into being, it will be through the co-operation of men of goodwill in all lands.

[1] *Times Literary Supplement*, July, 1922.

And in Mr. Gāndhī there is, among other marks of greatness, this, that, impassioned lover of his country though he be, it is not for her sake alone that he desires to see her strong and free.

IX

MR. GANDHI AND RELIGION

IT may seem an impertinence to enquire too closely into a man's attitude to the Unseen. *Secretum meum mihi.* But we are trying to understand the life and mind of a man set apart from his fellows by a very remarkable combination of qualities. And it is impossible to understand Mr. Gāndhī unless we recognize the place of religion in his life. To an extent to which that is true of very few men it is his supreme interest. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that he is not deeply interested in anything else. He himself has said: "Most religious men I have met are politicians in disguise. I, however, who wear the guise of a politician, am at heart a religious man." It is not only that he spends much time in prayer and meditation, but that he believes in the success of no enterprise which has not religion behind it. "This is the maxim which I have accepted, namely, that no work done by any man, no matter how great he is, will really prosper unless it has a religious backing." Behind all is the instinctive conviction that man is essentially a spirit, and that all else is subordinate to the health of the soul. Those who know him best tell us that he is by temperament an ascetic of the purest type, that he adopts ascetic practices not merely for the discipline of the body, but because the barer life is of outward things and the more independent of bodily desires, the more he rejoices. It

costs him no effort of self-denial, but literally increases his happiness. It gives him pain to find his countrymen cultivating a taste for condiments which is "slavery to the palate," and he bids them be satisfied with foods which are necessary for the maintenance of physical health. For all that complicates life, and entangles men in the lure of appetite, he has nothing but scorn.

What is his religion? He tells us that once he was strongly drawn towards Christianity, but that when he came to himself he found all that he needed to satisfy his soul in Hinduism. Elsewhere he writes: "I have endeavoured to study the Bible. I consider it as part of my Scriptures." "I am not a biased Hindu, but a humble and impartial student of religion with great leanings towards Christianity." Yet, though finding truth in all religions, he remains by profession and conviction a Hindu. Here is his confession of faith:

"I call myself a Sanātani Hindu, because:

"(1) I believe in the Vēdas, the Upanishads, the Purānas, and all that goes by the name of Hindu Scriptures, and therefore in the *avatārās* and rebirth.

"(2) I believe in the *Varṇāshrama Dharma* (caste) in a sense, in my opinion, strictly Vedic, but not in its present popular and crude sense.

"(3) I believe in the protection of the cow in a much larger sense than the popular.

"(4) I do not disbelieve in idol-worship."[1]

Mr. Gāndhī has a very strong sense of the sacredness of a national inheritance, and of the duty of preferring the products of one's own country to those of any other. He is a Hindu by religion because he has been born a Hindu by race. He would probably say to a man who was in doubt, "Remain in the religion of your own country, even

[1] *Young India*, Oct. 6th, 1921.

though you may feel the attraction of some other religion. It is the religion of your fathers, and where it is corrupt or imperfect you can reform or add to it." Very much as he bids his followers be content with the products of their village, even though much better can be imported from without, so Mr. Gāndhī accepts Hinduism, leaving out of it whatever offends his moral sense. It is part of the principle of śwadēshi. If he had been born in a Christian land he would certainly have been a very devout Christian, and would have given a much more thorough-going obedience to the commandments of Christ than most Christians have attained to. As it is, though he prefers the *Bhagavad Gītā* to the New Testament, yet he reads both, and it is impossible to doubt that he owes something to the teaching of Jesus. He would not dispute it, but gladly own it. It is of the essence of Hinduism to be tolerant. Mr. Gāndhī not only acknowledges the truth of other religions, he is prepared to accept light from any quarter. But Hinduism is the religion of his country, and he is persuaded that no other is needed to renew, consolidate and purify the national life.

This śwadēshi view of religion makes it easier to understand why he holds to certain beliefs which many of his countrymen are abandoning. One cannot imagine him using an idol to help him to communion with the Unseen. Yet he does not "disbelieve in idol-worship," meaning probably that if any man finds it of use to give the spirit wing he ought not to be condemned. So also he believes in caste. He believes that much in life has been fixed unalterably by the law of heredity, and that no useful purpose is served by rebelling against it. He sees in it also an example of an Indian faculty for organization which is of extreme value.

"Varṇāsharama (caste) is, in my opinion, inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science. It does attach to birth. A man cannot change his *varṇa* by choice. Not to abide by one's varṇa is to disregard the law of heredity."

And yet there is much in Mr. Gāndhī's whole attitude to men which is as far as possible from the view of mankind implied in the caste system. He believes in equality, in brotherhood. We cannot imagine him looking down upon any man, or treating any man as if he were foredoomed by birth to inferiority, or supposing that the inner spiritual qualities which fit a man for the highest kind of life are the peculiar possession of a privileged minority. The scandal of untouchability is in India the practical outcome of the belief in caste, if it be not also its logical consequence. Yet there is nothing which Mr. Gāndhī more abhors. He regards it as a taint upon Hinduism, and it has become for him "an intolerable burden." It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he accepts caste because it is an Indian institution, and that his mind sometimes moves in ways which have as little as possible to do with logical process.

Again, he speaks in language not short of rapture of cow-worship. He calls it "the central fact of Hinduism," "the dearest possession of the Hindu heart," "the one concrete belief common to all Hindus."

"Cow-protection is to me one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. It takes the human being beyond his species. The cow means to me the whole sub-human world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only did she give milk, but she also

made agriculture possible. The cow is a poem of pity. One reads pity in the gentle animal. She is the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God. The ancient seer, whoever he was, began with the cow. Cow-protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live so long as there are Hindus to protect the cow."[1]

Gentleness and compassion occupy a very high place in Mr. Gāndhī's scale of virtues. It is not difficult therefore to understand his idealization of an ancient practice which in any case it would be unintelligent to describe as idolatrous. There is something wholly natural and very beautiful in the Hindu reverence for the cow as a sharer in man's toil and the provider of his food. "Milk is the only food," said a Hindu, "which is the product of love." One can see that cow-protection is a safeguard of social well-being; it is a theme for poetry; in a sense it is part of religion. Yet when Mr. Gāndhī tells us that it is the central fact of Hinduism he is surely using language which is less than just to that religion.

Mr. Gāndhī's religion might then be described as an eclectic Hinduism, a Hinduism from which he leaves out all that offends him and which he regards as non-essential. In that exclusion he is, of course, perfectly justified. It is how all modern men treat an ancient religion which on the whole commands their allegiance. Nevertheless, the truth would seem to be that Mr. Gāndhī speaks of religion in two different senses. In defending his political attitude against those who accuse him of subordinating principle to policy, he uses these very interesting words:

"I have been experimenting with myself and my

[1] *Young India*, Oct. 6th, 1921. See also *ibid.*, May 18th, 1921.

friends by introducing religion into politics. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion, which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within, and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression, and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker, and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself."[1]

Mr. Gāndhī prizes Hinduism, and in all sincerity adopts such of its tenets and practices as he approves. It is the religion of his beloved country, of his mother and the saints. Yet the religion which supports his own soul, which directs his actions, is, by his own confession, something different and higher, a religion which has nothing to do with outward rites and social customs, but solely with the relation of the soul to its Maker. It is a purely ethical theism, which is at least as near akin to Christianity as it is to Hinduism. We are told in many quarters that, as a result of Mr. Gāndhī's many references to Christ and his admiration for the Bible, many of his followers have of late turned to the study of the Gospels, and indeed that, when they seek the most fitting way of describing his character, they speak of its resemblance to that of Christ. It is not wonderful. We are not able to believe that his attitude towards the Government of this country is consonant with the teaching of Jesus. But with respect to much else in his life most Christians would recognize that he has come far nearer to the Christian ideal than they have themselves. In his unworldliness, in his freedom from fear and anxiety, in that instinctive kindness which has

[1] *Young India*, May 12th, 1920.

made him through his life the friend of children and of the weak and injured, in his superiority to all personal rancour and resentment, in his refusal of force to resist any wrong done to himself, in the completeness of his self-mastery and his independence for happiness upon any outward things, they cannot but see features of the Christian character. And they are not concerned to enquire too curiously into the origin of virtues of which, wherever they are found, there is only one Source.

It matters little what name we give to this religion. Mr. Gāndhī's own catholicity is without bounds. He respects all sincere religions, seeing in them all a genuine aspiration of the human spirit towards the divine. In Mussulman, Hindu, Christian, Parsi and Jew, he sees alike children of one Father. And all this is no mere intellectual affirmation, but a genuine sympathy with all that is good in man. We cannot imagine him feeling otherwise than at home in any gathering of sincerely devout people. A religion is known by its fruits. Mr. Gāndhī's has made him to a rare degree sensitive about right and wrong. It has made him one of the most fearless of living men. It is most strange to him that anyone who believes in the soul should be afraid of death. With Socrates he would say, "Be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death." Nor has he any fear of suffering. He has always been cheerfully and serenely ready for anything that might come to him on the way which, rightly or wrongly, he believed to be his duty. And he never wearies of telling his countrymen that, until they are prepared to suffer for them, they can have no success in attaining the ends they seek. "If swarāj is delayed, it is delayed because we are not prepared calmly to meet

death, and inconveniences less than death." A religion which delivers a man from fear, and sets him so far above all scorn of any fellow-man, is a possession which anyone might envy.

Mr. Gāndhī's conceptions do not pass without searching criticism from his own countrymen. It is curiously interesting to find that these come from two opposite points of view. On the one hand, there are those who feel, and who feel bitterly, that he has given superstition a new hold upon the popular mind. By his denunciations of Western civilization and by his insistence upon the superiority of Hindu culture he has, they believe, induced the conviction that everything Indian is good, and that India has nothing to learn from without her borders. The average man does not easily make distinctions, and, being warned by one whom he reverences against Western influences, he easily leaps to the conclusion that there is nothing in his own inheritance which needs to be modified or condemned. These critics see in superstition the greatest of all obstacles to India's progress, and resent any influence which tends to bind the ancient chains afresh upon men's minds.

On the other hand, to the high-priests of Hindu orthodoxy Mr. Gāndhī is a dangerous heretic They will have nothing to do with his interpretations of Hinduism. They declare that his teaching contradicts its central tenets, and that, for example, his doctrine of ahiṁsā (non-violence) is "detrimental to Aryan culture." They assert that his leading ideas are not of Hindu origin at all, but are borrowed from foreign schools of thought. They resent, in particular, the Christian tendency of much of his thought, and roundly declare that the basis of his philosophy is not Aryan but Christian. Words of Christ are often on Mr. Gāndhī's lips, and in many quarters he has been freely com-

pared with Christ; and in this the orthodox see a serious menace to Hinduism. Dr. Kurtakoti, the Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya of Karvir Piṭha, quotes from a Christian paper the answer given by an American missionary to the question, "Does the Gāndhī movement hinder the progress of Christianity?" "Not at all; on the contrary, I believe that Mr. Gāndhī has done more for the spiritual authority of Jesus in India during the last year than all the missionaries together"; and adds:

"These sentiments, being expressed by a Christian missionary, are accepted as a compliment; but from the point of view of India, Hinduism, Hindu philosophy and Aryan culture, we can safely say that no sentiments could be so defamatory. . . . In this is to be marked the prime difference between Gāndhiji and the rest of the leaders in the field. Some of Gāndhiji's followers have gone so far as to declare that the world has so far produced only three prophets — Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ, and Mahātmā Gāndhī. This compliment, too, like that of the missionary quoted above, is a great slur upon the Aryan culture. That we find people who express such sentiments is a clear demonstration of the deteriorating effect of the movement and its philosophy on the individuality and culture of the nation, and also of the extent and the depth of the deterioration."

Time will show which of these critics has the greater reason for his fears. Meanwhile we are justified in believing that the permanent elements in Mr. Gāndhī's influence are those which are due to his selfless love of his own people, and his equally sincere desire to see right relations established between men everywhere; and in the end these must make for light and not for darkness, for concord and not for division.

Non-Violence

The belief in the doctrine of non-violence is so intimately a part of Gāndhī's religion that one final word

about it may here be added. That doctrine is the burden of the greater part of his writings, the centre of his appeal to his countrymen. He goes so far as to say that the religion of non-violence is the root of the religion of Hinduism. His orthodox critics retort that, according to Hinduism, the highest truth in the world is, that it is the motive alone which determines the merit of an action, and that, for example, Kṛishṇa urged upon Arjuna as a duty the killing of his opponents. But Mr. Gāndhī will have none of it. He is sure that violence is wrong, and that therefore it cannot be essential to Hinduism. Non-violence is for him very much more than a policy. He believes it to be the only right way, or at the least the highest way, of resisting evil. He has been criticized by those impatient spirits who believe that freedom can be won only by violence, and who fret at his restraining hand. He has been accused of insincerity, of adopting this creed only as a matter of policy, while being ready to advocate open violence, if the time came when that weapon could be taken in hand with any hope of success. It is necessary, therefore, to enquire carefully what his faith is, and with what consistency he has followed it.

During his life he has found himself faced again and again by what he believes to be a wrong done to the people by their governors. "How," he asked, "is it to be righted?" In connection with the Rowlatt Bills he wrote:

"When the governors of a country do a great wrong to the people whom they govern, history teaches us that they have resorted to violence, sometimes with apparent success, often they have been defeated; but violence can only result in violence, as darkness added to darkness really deepens it. The doctrine of violence is of the earth earthy, merely material, and can be no guide for a human being who at all believes in the existence of the soul."

The alternative to the force of arms is satyāgraha, truth-force, or soul-force, trusting only to truth and right, and using no violence to obtain redress. The use of this weapon alone is part of his creed. He knows that all men are not able to receive it. "It is," he says, "a purely religious instrument, and its use, therefore, is possible only in men religiously inclined." It is the religion of ahiṁsā. Elsewhere he writes: "Both soul-force and force of arms are from time immemorial. They represent respectively forces of good and evil." "Neither swarāj nor an awakening among us is possible without recourse to one or the other." There is no alternative to choosing one of them. For "either of them is preferable to rank cowardice."[1]

Thus there would seem to be no doubt about his personal convictions. In his own life he would carry the principle of non-resistance to evil to its utmost limit, and we can imagine no circumstance in which he would think it right to use violence upon a fellow-man. But Mr. Gāndhī is not a saint, or a teacher of ethical theory. He is a "practical idealist," a leader of men; and as such he is well aware how complicated life is, and how difficult it often is to know how far principles can be applied to it. He is not a believer in non-violence of the the same type as Tolstoy or the extreme pacifist. That is partly because, if there is anything which he hates more than violence, it is cowardice. He writes:

"I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. Thus, when my eldest son asked me what he should have done, had he been present when I was almost fatally assaulted

[1] On Soul-Force and Indian Politics, *Speeches and Writings*, pp. 779-80. Cf. Address on the Rowlatt Bills, *ibid.*, pp. 450-53.

in 1908, whether he should have run away and seen me killed, or whether he should have used his physical force, which he could and wanted to use, and defended me, I told him that it was his duty to defend me even by using violence. Hence it was that I took part in the Boer War, the so-called Zulu Rebellion, and the late War. Hence also do I advocate training in arms for those who believe in the method of violence. I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, that forgiveness is more manly than punishment."[1]

It would seem then that, though he would never adopt the measure of violence himself, he is prepared to support those whose cause he believes to be just, even though they are at the stage of holding it right to use force. For this reason he supported the Allies in the War, and worked hard to secure recruits for the army. Here is a just cause, an opportunity for India to show her sympathy and manhood. If men think it right ever to fight, let them do it now. For men who believe in the use of force it would be cowardly to hold back, and Mr. Gāndhī was prepared to urge them to do their duty. That in this he was logically consistent it would not be easy to maintain, but that he was, and remained, sincere cannot, we believe, be fairly questioned.

Further light upon Mr. Gāndhī's mind is furnished by the reply he gave to those who accused him of compromising the principle of non-violence by allying himself with the Khilāfat agitators, who did not share his faith. As a politician and a patriot it is clear that he saw in the Muhammadan grievance an opportunity of securing an

[1] *Young India*, Aug. 11th, 1920, "The Doctrine of the Sword."

advance to friendship between the two great communities, a friendship without which he saw no possibility of having a free India. But in espousing the Muslim cause as he saw it, he had no sense of being untrue to his principles.

"A believer in non-violence is pledged not to resort to violence or physical force, either directly or indirectly, in defence of anything, but he is not precluded from helping institutions or men that are themselves not based on non-violence. My business is to refrain from any violence myself, and to induce by persuasion and service as many of God's creatures as I can to join me in the belief and practice. But I would be untrue to my faith if I refused to assist in a just cause any men or measures that did not coincide with the principle of non-violence. I would be promoting violence if, finding the Mussulmans to be in the right, I did not resist those who had treacherously plotted the destruction of the dignity of Islam."[1]

Here again the point is not whether Mr. Gāndhī's judgment of the Khilāfat issue was a sound one, but whether, assuming that judgment, he was true to himself in joining the Khilāfat leaders. His argument is not without subtlety, of which perhaps he was conscious when he added:

"Life is a very complex thing, and truth and non-violence present problems which often defy analysis and judgment. One discovers truth, and the method of applying, the only legitimate means of vindicating it, i.e. satyāgraha, or soul-force, by patient endeavour and silent prayer. I can only assure friends that I spare no pains to grope my way to the right, and that humble and constant endeavour and silent prayer are always my two trusty companions along the weary but beautiful path that all seekers must tread."[2]

It is easy to see in these words the hypocrisy of a man who, grasping at the nearest means to a righteous end, has

[1] *Young India*, June 1st, 1921. [2] *Ibid.*, June 1st, 1921.

to persuade himself and others that they are legitimate. To a fairer critic they are only human and sane. Life is complex, and duty, in a world where the majority of men do not even understand one's faith, is hard to discover. There are many sincere Christians who accept Christ's teaching about resisting evil, and who believe that truth and love are infinitely better and stronger things than force, but who yet believe that occasions may and do arise in a world of men not yet converted to that faith, when the use of force in defence of life and freedom is justified, and when even war may be a hateful but necessary duty. It would be perverse to question their sincerity. Yet they would be the first to acknowledge the difficulty of putting their convictions into language which is not at least as open to misconstruction as that of Mr. Gāndhī.

The day may come when Indians may take the sword in hand in a despairing attempt to win what they think will otherwise be denied to them. But if words mean anything, and if Mr. Gāndhī is only half as sincere as his life and suffering have proved him to be, that will be the darkest day in his history. He would rather that they did so than that by cowardice they should condemn themselves to national degeneracy. But it would be to him the saddest and final proof of his and their failure. Meanwhile, Mr. K. Natarajan is justified in his assertion that "the Mahātmā's greatest contribution to humanity is the application which he has elaborated of the grand principle of ahiṁsā to the region of politics." Non-Co-operation has done something for the people of India. It has quickened their self-respect, and strengthened their manhood, and taught them to depend upon themselves and do things for themselves. As a campaign for the overthrow of the British Government it has failed, and was bound to fail, because it was not the

MAHĀTMĀ GĀNDHĪ
AFTER HIS RELEASE FROM JAIL.

From a painting by a Student of Art at Sabarmati.

best or wisest way of carrying into the future the good of the past. But if India were united in a determination to gain without violence those things which she deems necessary for the development of her national life and the saving of her soul, nothing could or would be denied to her.

APPENDIX I

THE PANJAB INQUIRY DISCLOSURES

"LET us turn our eyes to some of the facts disclosed in the evidence of the principal European witnesses. The wholesale slaughter of hundreds of unarmed men at Jallianwalla Bagh, without giving the crowd an opportunity to disperse, the indifference of General Dyer to the condition of the hundreds of people who were wounded in the firing, the firing of machine-guns into crowds who had dispersed and taken to their heels, the flogging of men in public, the order compelling thousands of students to walk sixteen miles a day for roll-calls, the arrest and detention of 500 students and professors, the compelling of school children of five to seven to attend on parade to salute the flag, the order imposing upon owners of property the responsibility for the safety of the martial law posters stuck on their properties, the flogging of a marriage party, the censorship of mails, the closure of the Badshahi Mosque for six weeks, the arrest and detention of people without any substantial reason, and especially of people who had rendered service to the State in connection with the War or otherwise, the flogging of six of the biggest boys in the Islamiah School simply because they happened to be schoolboys and to be big boys, the construction of an open cage for the confinement of arrested persons, the invention of novel punishments, like the crawling order, the skipping order, and others, unknown to any system of law, civil or military, the handcuffing and roping together of persons and keeping them in open trucks for fifteen hours, the use of aeroplanes and Lewis guns, and the latest paraphernalia of scientific warfare against unarmed citizens, the taking of hostages and the con-

fiscation and destruction of property for the purpose of securing the attendance of absentees, the handcuffing of Hindus and Muhammadans in pairs with the object of demonstrating the consequences of Hindu-Muhammadan unity, the cutting off of the electric and water supplies from Indian houses, the removal of fans from Indian houses and giving them for use to Europeans, the commandeering of all vehicles owned by Indians and giving them to Europeans for use, the feverish disposal of cases with the object of forestalling the termination of martial law, are some of the many incidents of the administration of martial law, which created a reign of terror in the Panjab and have shocked the public."[1]

For our purpose it is chiefly relevant to note the effect which these events had upon Mr. Gāndhī. He deeply regretted, and in the strongest language condemned, the violence of the mob and the murder of innocent Europeans. But he believed that the disorder had arisen through an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the people to protest against unacceptable legislation; and, with the whole of India, he learned with indignant horror of the measures which had been taken to avenge the murders and to strike terror into the hearts of the people. It seemed to him that a Government under which these things could happen, which did not immediately repudiate the acts of its servants and call them to account for their barbarity, had ceased to deserve the confidence of the people, or to have the right to rule. To co-operate with such a Government henceforth seemed to him sinful. The severity of the Secretary of State's condemnation of General Dyer's methods was probably not understood in India. What did impress the public mind was that the chief

[1] Sir P. Sivaswamy Iyer, B.A., C.I.E., Dewan Bahadur, for five years Member of the Executive Council of the Government of Madras, as President of the first National Conference of the Moderate party, December, 1920.

condemnation in the Hunter Report was of the evil of satyāgraha, that Sir Michael O'Dwyer was exonerated, that no punishment was meted out to some of those who had been guilty of excesses, and that they were even allowed to continue to hold office. Mr. Gāndhī saw in it a conspiracy to uphold official iniquity. It seemed to him a scandal of such magnitude as could not be tolerated by the nation if it was to preserve its self-respect and become a free partner in the Empire. It was a proof to him of how little India counted in the Imperial Councils. Henceforth to the end he was to insist with unfaltering conviction that, until the Panjab wrong was confessed and undone, so far as it could be undone, it was a plain duty to cease to co-operate with the Indian Government.

It cannot be denied that Mr. Gāndhī had much reason for his profound and bitter disappointment. While many British people in India, of high and lowly rank, both official and non-official, condemned the excesses of martial law administration with both regret and indignation, it was clear that many Englishmen and Englishwomen regarded General Dyer as a hero. A fund was opened in London by the *Morning Post* to provide him with a sum of money as a solace for his loss of employment. Though the House of Commons affirmed the principles of the Secretary of State's Despatch, the House of Lords, in spite of the protests of Lord Curzon and Lord Sinha, passed the motion of Lord Finlay condoning General Dyer. There were many in the country who held to the belief that the only way to rule India was by force. We believe that the majority of the British people, had they known the facts, would have taken a different view. But for that there was little evidence. The many officials in India who knew that wrong had been done were not at liberty to speak.

Judged by its acts, and by its failure to act, Government had put a heavy strain upon India's loyalty. For his abandonment of faith Mr. Gāndhī had at least some excuse.

APPENDIX II

RELEASE OF MR. GĀNDHĪ

WHILE these pages were being printed[1] the news came that, after two years of imprisonment, Mr. Gāndhī had been released. His health had given way, and it became necessary, to save his life, to operate for appendicitis. Before he had recovered from the operation Government decided to remit, unconditionally, the remainder of his sentence. He is therefore a free man once more, and it is the desire of all, whatever may be their opinions, that he may regain his strength and devote it to the service of his country.

He has spoken very warmly of the skill and consideration with which he has been treated by his doctors. Until he has fully recovered health, and become able to learn all that has happened during his retirement, he will take no part in public affairs. But he has sent a message to the people of India through Muhammad Ali, the President of the Congress, and this message, as the latest expression of his mind, may form a fitting conclusion to this little book.

Sassoon Hospital, Poona.
7th February, 1924.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I send you, as the President of the Congress, a few words which I know our countrymen expect from me on my sudden release. I am sorry that the Government

[1] The first edition.

have prematurely released me on account of my illness. Such a release can bring me no joy, for I hold that the illness of a prisoner affords no ground for his release.

I would be guilty of ungratefulness if I did not tell you, and through you the whole public, that both the gaol and the hospital authorities have been all attention during my illness. Colonel Murray, the Superintendent of the Yerrowada Prison, as soon as he suspected that my illness was at all serious, invited Colonel Maddock to assist him, and I am sure promptest measures were taken by him to secure for me the best treatment possible. I could not have been removed to the David and Jacob Sassoon Hospitals a moment earlier. Colonel Maddock and his staff have treated me with the utmost attention and kindness. I may not omit the nurses, who have surrounded me with sisterly care. Though it is now open to me to leave this hospital, knowing that I can get no better treatment anywhere else, with Colonel Maddock's kind permission, I have decided to remain under his care till the wound is healed and no further medical treatment is necessary.

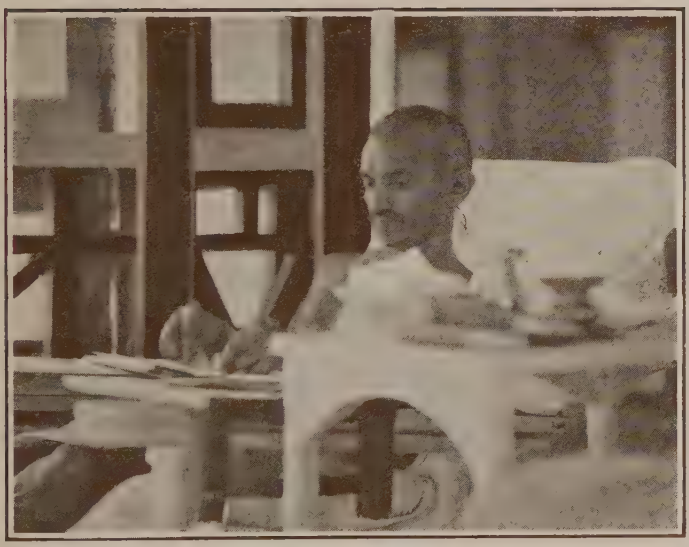
The public will easily understand that for some time to come I shall be quite unfit for active work, and those who are interested in my speedy return to active life will hasten it by postponing their natural desire to see me. I am unfit, and shall be for some weeks perhaps, to see a number of visitors. I shall better appreciate the affection of friends if they will devote greater time and attention to such national work as they may be engaged in, and especially to hand-spinning.

My release has brought me no relief. Whereas before release I was free from responsibility save that of conforming to gaol discipline and trying to qualify myself for more efficient service, I am now overwhelmed with a sense of responsibility I am ill-fitted to discharge. Telegrams of congratulations have been pouring in upon me. They have but added to the many proofs I have received of the affection of our countrymen for me. It naturally pleases and comforts me. Many telegrams, however, betray hopes of results from my service which stagger me. The thought

of my utter incapacity to cope with the work before me humbles my pride.

Though I know very little of the present situation in the country, I know sufficient to enable me to see that, perplexing as the national problems were at the time of the Bardoli resolutions, they are far more perplexing to-day. It is clear that without unity between Hindus, Muhammadans, Sikhs, Parsis, and Christians, and other Indians, all talk of swarāj is idle. This unity, which I fondly believed in 1922 had been nearly achieved, has, so far as Hindus and Mussulmans are concerned, I observe, suffered a severe check. Mutual trust has given place to distrust. An indissoluble bond between the various communities must be established if we are to win freedom. Will the thanksgiving of the nation over my release be turned into a solid unity between the communities? That will restore me to health far quicker than any medical treatment or rest cure. When I heard in the gaol of the tension between Hindus and Muhammadans in certain places, my heart sank within me. The rest I am advised to have will be no rest with the burden of disunion preying upon me. I ask all those who cherish love towards me to utilize it in furtherance of the union we all desire. I know that the task is difficult, but nothing is difficult if we have a living faith in God. Let us realize our own weakness and approach Him, and He will surely help. It is weakness which breeds fear, and fear breeds distrust. Let us both shed our fear; but I know that even if one of us will cease to fear we shall cease to quarrel. Nay, I say that your tenure of office will be judged solely by what you can do in the cause of union. I know that we love each other as brothers. I ask you, therefore, to share my anxiety and help me to go through the period of illness with a lighter heart.

If we could but visualize the growing pauperism of the land and realize that the spinning-wheel is the only remedy for the disease, the wheel will leave us little leisure for fighting. I had during the last two years ample time and solitude for hard thinking. It made me a firmer



MR. GĀNDHĪ RECOVERING FROM HIS OPERATION, MARCH, 1924.

After leaving hospital, Mr. Gāndhī went for convalescence to Juhu, a seaside resort near Bombay. The picture shows the invalid dictating to his stenographer.

From a photograph by the "Times of India."

believer than ever in the efficacy of the Bardoli programme, and therefore in the unity between the races, the charka, the removal of untouchability, and the application of non-violence in thought, word and deed to our methods, as indispensable for swarāj. If we faithfully and fully carry out this programme we need never resort to civil disobedience, and I should hope that it will never be necessary; but I must state that my thinking, prayerfully and in solitude, has not weakened my belief in the efficacy and righteousness of civil disobedience. I hold it, as ever before, to be a nation's right and duty when its vital being is in jeopardy. I am convinced that it is attended with less danger than war, and whilst the former when successful benefits both the resister and the wrongdoer, the latter harms both the victor and the vanquished.

You will not expect me to express any opinion on the vexed question of return by Congressmen to Legislative Councils and the Assembly. Though I have not in any way altered my opinion about the boycott of Councils, law courts and Government schools, I have no data for coming to a judgment upon the alterations made at Delhi, and I do not propose to express any opinion until I have had the opportunity of discussing the question with our illustrious countrymen who have felt called upon, in the interests of the country, to advise removal of the boycott of legislative bodies

In conclusion, may I, through you, thank all the very numerous senders of congratulatory messages. It is not possible for me personally to acknowledge each message. It has gladdened my heart to see among the messages many from Moderate friends I have. Non-Co-operators can have no quarrel with them. They, too, are well-wishers of their country, and serve it to the best of their lights. If we consider them to be in the wrong we can hope to win them over only by friendliness and patient reasoning, never by abusing. Indeed, we want to regard Englishmen, too, as our friends, and not misunderstand them by treating them as our enemies; and if we are to-day engaged in a struggle against the British Government, it is against

the system for which it stands, not against the Englishmen who are administering the system. I know that many have failed to understand. Always bear in mind the distinction, and in so far as we have failed we have harmed our cause.

I am your sincere friend and brother,

(Sd.) M. K. GĀNDHĪ.

APPENDIX III

THE UNITY CONFERENCE

Delhi, September 26th–October 2nd, 1924

DURING Mr. Gāndhī's incarceration the relations between the Hindu and Muhammadan communities were becoming increasingly strained. Communal quarrels had become very frequent in three provinces, and in several places had resulted in riots. The serious Lucknow riot of September, 1924, led Mahātmā Gāndhī to take to penance and prayer, according to his own conviction and practice under all untoward and extraordinary circumstances. In his statement, which he issued to the Press on September 18th, he indicated the reasons as well as the scope and duration of his fast. He said: "The recent events have proved unbearable for me. My helplessness" [wrongly transmitted as "hopelessness" in the telegraphed version] "is still more unbearable. My religion teaches me that, whenever one is very distressed (distress which one cannot remove) one must fast and pray. Nothing evidently that I can say or write can bring the two communities, Hindus and Mussulmans, together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast of twenty-one days, commencing from to-day and ending on the 8th October. It is both a penance and a prayer. As a penance I need not have taken the public into my confidence, but publish the fast as (let me hope) an effective prayer both to the Hindus and the

Mussulmans, who have hitherto worked in union, not to commit suicide. I respectfully invite the heads of all communities, including Englishmen, to meet and end the quarrel, which is a disgrace to religion and humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate Him in our hearts."[1]

Again Mr. Gāndhī's mind is clearly revealed and understood when his later statement, of September 25th, i.e. on the very eve of the Unity Conference, is taken into account and read with the above. In his own paper he gave the following history of his mental suffering: "I was violently shaken by Amethi, Sambhal and Gulbarga. I have read the reports about Amethi and Sambhal prepared by Hindu and Mussulman friends. I had learnt the joint finding of Hindu and Mussulman friends who went to Gulbarga. I was writhing in deep pain and yet I had no remedy. The news of Kohat set the smouldering mass aflame. Something had got to be done. . . . My longing is to be able to cement the two (the Hindu and Mussulman) with my blood."[2]

The Mahātmā entered upon his fast in the house of the Muhammadan leader, Muhammad Ali, at Delhi, where he had gone from Bombay, and the conference was called at Delhi to suit the convenience of the members of the Legislative Assembly and of the Council of State. Invitations were sent to and accepted by the leaders of all parties, including Dr. Besant, Messrs. Jinnah and Chintamani, Dewan Bahadur Rangachariar, the Hon. Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, and Dr. S. K. Datta. The Most Rev. Dr. F. Westcott, Metropolitan in India, was present by special invitation. The original date, September 23rd, had

[1] *Indian Social Reformer*, Oct. 11th. [2] *Young India*, Sept. 25th.

to be changed to the 26th, and Pandit Motilal Nehru was elected president. The Mahātmā was urged to break his fast, and was reminded by the Metropolitan that a fast in itself does not provide a basis of unity, however great may be the sympathies excited by it. Mr. Gāndhī holding on his own way, the conference proceeded with this terrible background of the voluntary suffering of the best loved and most revered man in India. There was a Subjects Committee of eight, which did the real work of the conference. A series of resolutions was put forward, but it was found that the solution was not along those lines. A new committee of eleven then recast the resolutions, which are given below. It is not yet time to pronounce an opinion on their merits or their effects.

Messages of sympathy were published in *The Statesman* of Calcutta, October 8th and 9th, from Lord Olivier (Secretary of State), H.E. the Viceroy, Sir A. Muddiman (Home Member), Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri, Sir T. B. Sapru, H.E. the Governor of Bengal, H.E. the Governor of the U.P., H.E. the Governor of Assam, H.E. the Governor of Bihar and Orissa, the Bishop of Bombay, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE UNITY CONFERENCE, DELHI

September 26th–October 2nd, 1924

Resolution No. 1

This conference places on record its deep grief and concern at the fast which Mahātmā Gāndhī has undertaken. This conference is emphatically of opinion that the utmost freedom of conscience and religion is essential, and condemns any desecration of places of worship, to whatsoever faith they may belong, and any persecution or punishment of any person for adopting or reverting to any faith, and further

condemns any attempt by compulsion to convert people to one's faith or to enforce one's own religious observances at the cost of the rights of others.

The members of the conference assure Mahātmā Gāndhī and pledge themselves to use their utmost endeavours to enforce these principles and to condemn any deviation from them even under provocation. This conference further authorizes the President to convey personally to Mahātmā Gāndhī the united wish of this conference that he should immediately break his fast in order to permit this conference to have the benefit of his co-operation, advice and guidance in deciding upon the speediest means of effectively checking the evil which is fast spreading over the country.

Resolution No. 2

This conference deplores the dissensions and quarrels that are now going on between Hindus and Muslims in several places in India, resulting in loss of life, burning and plunder of property, and desecration of temples. The conference regards them as barbarous and contrary to religion. This conference tenders its warm sympathy to the sufferers. This conference is of opinion that it is unlawful and irreligious for any person to take the law into his own hands by way of retaliation or punishment. The conference is of opinion that all differences, no matter of what nature soever, should be referred to arbitration, and if that be impossible even to a court of law.

Resolution No. 3

There shall be a Central National Panchayat of not more than 15 persons, with power to organize and appoint local panchayats in consultation with the local representatives of the different communities, to enquire into and settle all disputes and differences, including recent occurrences, where necessary and desirable. The said National Panchayat shall have power to frame rules and regulations for carrying out this resolution.

The conference appoints the following to act as the Central National Panchayat, with power to add to their

number up to 15 and co-opt local representatives as additional members: Mahātmā Gāndhī (chairman and convener), Hakim Ajmal Khan, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. G. K. Nariman, Dr. S. K. Datta, Master Sundar Singh of Lyallpur.

Resolution No. 4

With a view to give effect to the general principles promoting better relations between the various communities of India laid down in Resolution 1, and to secure full toleration of all faiths, beliefs and religious practices, this conference records its opinion—

(*a*) That every individual or group shall have full liberty to hold and give expression to his or their beliefs and follow any religious practice, with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with their rights. In no case may such individual or group revile the founders, holy persons or tenets of any other faith.

(*b*) That all places of worship, of whatever faith or religion, shall be considered sacred and inviolable, and shall on no account be attacked or desecrated, whether as the result of provocation or by way of retaliation for sacrilege of the same nature. It shall be the duty of every citizen, of whatever faith or religion, to prevent such attack or desecration as far as possible, and where such attack or desecration has taken place it shall always be promptly condemned.

(*c*) (i) That Hindus must not expect that the exercise of right of cow-slaughter by Muslims can or will be stopped by the use of force, resolution of a local body, act of legislature, or order of court, but only by mutual consent, and must trust to the good sense of Muslims and the establishment of better relations between the two communities to create deeper respect for their feelings.

(ii) Nothing stated in the above clause shall unsettle or affect any local customs or agreement between the two communities already in existence, nor will it authorize cow-slaughter in a place where it has not taken place before. Any dispute on facts should be settled by the National Panchayat formed under Resolution No. 3.

(iii) Cow-slaughter shall not take place in a way offensive to the religious sentiments of the Hindus.

(iv) The Muslim members of the conference hereby call upon their co-religionists to do everything in their power to reduce cow-slaughter.

(*d*) (i) That Muslims must not expect to stop Hindu music near or in front of mosques by force, resolution of a local body, act of legislature, or order of court, except by mutual consent, but must rely upon the good sense of Hindus to respect their feelings.

(ii) Nothing stated in the above clause shall unsettle or affect any local custom or agreement between the two communities already in existence; nor shall it authorize the playing of music in front of mosques where it has not been played before. Any dispute with regard to the latter shall be referred for settlement to the National Panchayat formed under Resolution No. 3.

(iii) The Hindu members of this conference call upon their co-religionists to avoid playing music before mosques in such a manner as to disturb congregational prayers.

(*e*) (i) That Muslims must not expect to stop by force, resolution of a local body, act of legislature, or order of court, except by mutual consent, the performance of *arti* or the playing of music, including blowing of *shankhs* by Hindus during worship and on other occasions, in their houses or temples or public places, at any time, even if the house or temple or public place in question is situated in close proximity to a mosque; but they should trust to the good sense of the Hindus to accommodate them.

(ii) Nothing stated in the above clause shall unsettle or affect any local custom or agreement between the two communities already in existence. Any dispute on facts should be settled by the National Panchayat formed under Resolution No. 3.

(*f*) That Muslims are at liberty to chant *Azan* or offer prayers in their own houses or in any mosque or public place not set apart for the religious observance of any other community.

(*g*) (i) Where the slaughter of an animal or sale of meat is permissible on other grounds, no objection shall be

MAHĀTMĀ GĀNDHĪ
DELIVERING HIS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT THE
BELGAUM CONGRESS

taken to the method of slaughter, whether by *jhatka*, *bali*, or *zibah*.

(ii) Wherever there is any dispute regarding the sale of any kind of meat in a particular locality or quarter it shall be referred for settlement to the local panchayat.

(*h*) That every individual is at liberty to follow any faith and to change it whenever he so wills, and shall not by reason of such change of faith render himself liable to any punishment or persecution at the hands of the followers of the faith renounced by him.

(*i*) That every individual or group is at liberty to convert or re-convert another by argument or persuasion, but must not attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means, such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under sixteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under sixteen years of age is found stranded without his parent or guardian by a person of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy about any conversion or re-conversion.

(*j*) That no community should attempt to stop by force the construction of a new place of worship by a member of another community on his own land, but such new place of worship should be built at a reasonable distance from an existing place of worship of any other community.

Resolution No. 5

This conference is of opinion that a section of the Press, specially in the North, is responsible for increasing the tension between different communities by publishing wild exaggerations, reviling each other's religion, and by every means fomenting prejudice, and condemns such writings and appeals to the public to stop patronage of such newspapers and pamphlets, and advises central and local panchayats to supervise such writings, and from time to time to publish correct versions.

RESOLUTION No. 6

It having been represented to this conference that in certain places acts of impropriety have been committed in relation to mosques, the Hindu members of this conference condemn such acts wherever committed.

RESOLUTION No. 7

The Hindu and Muslim members of this conference call upon their co-religionists to extend full tolerance to the minor communities of India, and to deal with them in all questions of communal intercourse with justice and generosity.

RESOLUTION No. 8

This conference is of opinion that attempts, on behalf of members of one community, to boycott members of any other community and to stop social or commercial relations with them, made in certain parts of the country, are repreprehensible and are an effective bar to the promotion of good relations between the various communities in India. The conference therefore appeals to all communities to avoid any such boycotts and exhibitions of ill-will.

RESOLUTION No. 9

This conference calls upon men and women of all communities throughout the country to offer daily prayers during the last critical week of Mahātmajī's fast, and to organize mass meetings on the 8th of October in every town and village, to express the nation's thankfulness to the Almighty, and to pray that the spirit of goodwill and brotherliness may pervade and unite all the communities of India, and that the principle of full religious toleration and mutual goodwill declared in this conference may be adopted and given effect to by members of all communities in India.

SHUAIB QURESHI,
JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU,
Secretaries of the Conference.

Delhi,
2nd October, 1924.

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